



**Full
Gospel
Australia**

**The Full Gospel Churches of Australia
Marriage Manual**

For the use of Ordained Ministers within the Full Gospel Churches of Australia

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Introduction

Performing marriages is a great opportunity to speak into the life of a couple, their relatives and friends, indeed, a whole community. Done well, a marriage can be an opportunity for the gospel and can be a bridge into a community for a church. Otherwise a marriage can bring reproach onto the church, the reputation of the denomination and ultimately on the reputation of God.

The Full Gospel Churches of Australia administers religious marriage celebrants on behalf of the Commonwealth Government and therefore encourages all our ordained ministers to take appropriate action and care in the preparation for, execution of and post ceremony administration and pastoral care in order that all marriages conducted under the auspices of The Full Gospel Churches of Australia are valid, and that the Attorney-General's departments of each State, Territory and the Commonwealth of Australia are satisfied with their conduct.

This manual gives you information regarding current best practices regarding the process of conducting legal marriages in Australia. You will find in it information on how to conduct the pre marriage interviews, collecting information, privacy issues surrounding the collection of private information, ensuring the information you collect is both relevant and valid, how to conduct the ceremony and the administrative processes you need to emplace in order to ensure your marriage ceremony is legally binding.

All of the information contained herein is offered as information only, it is strongly recommended that you seek advice from your State's Attorney-General's Department as they are the final arbitrator of what is and is not legal.

Marriages are a happy and fun event and should be enjoyed by everyone, including you. Although it is expected that you will be nervous, especially for your first few weddings, it is a good thing to enjoy the experience on purpose. If you do your preparation well, ensure you have all your information correct, spellings correct and that any documents you have sighted are legal, then enjoying the day is much easier. If you have structures in place to ensure you perform all your administrative duties properly, you will never have cause to fear.

We hope you greatly benefit from this manual and that every marriage you solemnise is a wonderful experience and an effective tool for the gospel.

The National Executive
The Full Gospel Churches of Australia

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Section One: Legalities & paperwork requirements

1.1 Attorney General's Expectations & Legalities

As members of the clergy we all understand that marriage is a spiritual act. We know that two separate entities become "one flesh." We no doubt are also clear that the two people are joined together in God's sight. Nevertheless, this spiritual act results in a new legal status. As such, we are duty-bound to ensure that we comply with the legal aspects of marriage. Failure to do so can result in penalties and being struck from the list of authorised marriage celebrants, not to mention the pain and inconvenience caused to the individuals involved.

The Attorney General's Department is the government agency that oversees the laws of marriage. In Queensland it is called the Department of Justice and Attorney-General. This department administers the Marriage Act of 1961, the body of legislation that covers marriages in Australia.

A printed version of the Act can be purchased by ringing CanPrint Communications on 1 300 656 863; alternatively it can be viewed on the internet at:

<https://www.legislation.gov.au/details/c2016c00865>

Alternatively, you may obtain a brief summary of the Act and how it applies to ministers of religion called: *Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 for Marriage Celebrants*. The URL for this resource is: [https://www.ag.gov.au/FamiliesAndMarriage/Marriage/Documents/Guidelines on the Marriage Act 1961 for Marriage Celebrants.pdf](https://www.ag.gov.au/FamiliesAndMarriage/Marriage/Documents/Guidelines%20on%20the%20Marriage%20Act%201961%20for%20Marriage%20Celebrants.pdf)

The following 12 pages represent an overview of the information contained in the explanatory material. All of the most relevant points for ministers of religion are covered; however, less common information, such as that pertaining to the use of interpreters, overseas marriages, and information for celebrants who are not ministers of religion has been omitted below. It is advisable to read the 'Guidelines' document, especially if you are likely to encounter any of these omitted circumstances.

The Act covers marriages by celebrants and ministers of religion. Ministers have to fulfil several requirements:

- Section 30 of the Marriage Act requires that Ministers of Religion be registered with the Attorney-General in order to solemnise marriages.
- You must make yourself fully conversant with the provisions of the marriage laws before solemnising any marriage.
- When completing marriage documents, use the declared recognised denomination (The Full Gospel Churches of Australia) for the purpose of the Act and the designation (Reverend) shown on the letter confirming registration.
- Section 35 requires Ministers of Religion to notify the Attorney-General's office within 30 days of any changes, including change of name, address, designation, and withdrawal from the ministry.

1.2 Procedures and Paperwork

Authorised celebrants should appreciate that marriage documents will form part of a chain of documents that a person will use over the course of their life to establish their identity and obtain identity documents. As a result, the accuracy of marriage documents will have a significant effect on the ease with which a person will be able to obtain identity documents.

1.2.1 Notice of Intended Marriage.

The first paperwork is the **Notice of Intended Marriage (NOIM)**.

You can download copies of the form from www.ag.gov.au/celebrants. (Take care to get all **four** pages and use the latest version available. **You should use the version currently online.**)

Before filling in any details, it is advisable to read the whole form with the couple first. Be sure to explain that it is an offence to submit a notice with false statements, defects, or errors.

General Directions

- Any questions that cannot be answered must be completed with the words “not known” or the form could be deemed incomplete upon submission.
- Type the answers or use block letters.
- It can be completed by the couple or the celebrant on behalf of the couple.
- It is best to avoid making errors; but if a mistake is found, it must be changed by lightly striking through it, making the change, and the parties and the celebrant initialling it.

Names

- Names must match the names on the birth certificates, Australian Passport, BDM issued change of name certificate or change of name by deed poll document.
- A certificate of a previous marriage, or divorce, or Australian citizenship, may also be provided to establish the correct name to use on the NOIM.
- Double check spelling. All given names should be recorded accurately.
- Where a person is commonly known by a name other than those on their evidence documents above, the commonly known name should **never** be used on the NOIM or other certificates.
- The form can be signed using their normal signature.

Residence in Australia...

The form makes provision for years and months. If the residence here is over two years, only the number of years is necessary. If the residence is under two years, use months and years.

Conjugal Status

- Where a party has never been married or has gone through a void ceremony, their status should be entered as: “Never validly married”.
- Do NOT use Bachelor and Spinster.
- If you have any doubts or questions, contact the Registry of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in your State or Territory.

Evidence of Birth/proof of age

- To prevent underage people from marrying, the celebrant must sight an official certificate of birth or an official extract of an entry in an official register showing the date and place of birth, or Australian Passport.
- People should be advised of penalties for making false declarations, the maximum of which is 4 years imprisonment.
- A person born overseas can use either a birth certificate or a passport issued by an overseas government, as long as it shows the date and place of the party’s birth.
- If either the birth certificate or the extract appears to be altered, the celebrant should refer the certificate or extract to the nearest registering authority.
- It is an offence for a celebrant to solemnise a marriage before the evidence of date of birth has been produced. It is best to encourage the parties to produce the certificates, extracts, Australian Passport, overseas passports or statutory declarations with the NOIM, but they may be produced anytime before the ceremony.
- The birth certificate, extract, Australian Passport or overseas passport should be returned to the party. It may be a good idea to ask the party for permission to take a copy of it to keep in their file for future reference. If a statutory declaration is produced (see Explanatory Material on the Marriage Act 1961 for Marriage Celebrants, p12-13), retain it and forward to the appropriate registering authority with the official marriage certificate.

Termination of Last Marriage

The celebrant must sight proof of termination prior to the wedding, either a death certificate or a certificate of divorce, or an official copy of the decree or death entry.

- The latest it can be sighted is the day before the ceremony.
- If the party’s divorce was granted overseas, they should be advised to seek legal advice. Section 104 of the Family Law Act 1975 determines the validity of dissolution that was granted overseas.

Signature

- Must be in the presence of an authorised celebrant, a Commissioner for Declarations, a justice of the peace, a barrister or solicitor, a legally qualified medical practitioner, or a member of the Australian Federal Police Force or of the state police force.

Period of Validity for NOIM

- Up to 18 months can be given; however at least one month's notice must be given. One calendar month: for example, if the notice is received by the celebrant on 15 March, the marriage may not be solemnised before 16 April but may be solemnised on that day.
- Churches are free to fix their own period (more than a month but not less).

1.2.2 Shortening the notice Period

The period can be shortened to less than a month.

- There are five categories (only) of circumstances set out in the regulations:
 - Employment or travel commitments
 - Wedding or celebration arrangements or religious considerations
 - Medical reasons
 - Legal proceedings
 - Error in giving notice
- Application can be made orally; there is no form to complete. Ring the Department of Justice and Attorney General.

Stale Notices

A notice is stale after 18 months.

1.2.3 Declarations as to Conjugal Status & No Legal Impediments to the Marriage

- Each of the parties must make and subscribe before the celebrant a declaration as to the party's conjugal status (single, married, widowed, divorced).
- Two forms for this declaration are printed on the back of the registration certificate of marriage.
- The declarations must be made **PRIOR** to the solemnisation, as close as possible to the ceremony. (This is a good reason for a final meeting with the couple in the week or so before the marriage ceremony.)

- It is an offence for an authorised celebrant to solemnise a marriage unless both parties have made their declarations.
- The party should cross out on the form whatever is inapplicable. The celebrant should initial the deletion in the margin.
- If a party is a minor, the celebrant needs to check that the section 12 judicial order has been obtained and check that the consent/s have been obtained. If neither party is a minor, the celebrant should strike out the words “consents received” on the back of the NOIM.

1.2.4 Availability of Marriage Education and Counselling

- As soon as possible after receiving the NOIM, the celebrant must give the parties information outlining the obligations and consequences of marriage. You can obtain colour brochures called *Happily Ever Before and After* from CanPrint Communications 1 300 656 863
- Make a notation in the appropriate space on the NOIM (Document referred to in paragraph 42 (5A) of the Act given to the parties) to indicate you have given the parties this document. If no copies were available, note this on the form; don't leave it blank or it may indicate the celebrant has not fulfilled his/her obligations.
- Celebrants have an obligation to maintain up-to-date knowledge about appropriate family relationship services in your community. Keep an updated list of Marriage Counselling Services and their phone numbers with your register and forms.

1.3 When is a Marriage Not Able to Be Solemnised?

...When at the time of the marriage, either of the parties is lawfully married to some other person

- It is important to be aware that people can both marry and divorce overseas.
- The celebrant must satisfy him/herself about the dissolution; ask couples to provide legal advice supporting the validity of any overseas divorce.

...The parties are within a prohibited relationship

- A man cannot marry his grandmother, mother, sister or half-sister, daughter or granddaughter.
- A woman cannot marry her grandfather, father, brother or half-brother, son or grandson.
- The relationship between an adopted child and the adoptive parents is deemed to have been a natural relationship of child and parent.
- Marriages between first cousins are permitted.

...Section 48 violations

- Section 48 provides that marriages must be in accordance with sections 40-47 of the Act.
- If a marriage is solemnised by a person who is not authorised to solemnise marriages and the party knew of this, the marriage will be invalid.

...Non-consensual

- Both parties must consent to becoming husband and wife and understand what marriage involves.
- Absence of consent can be based on: duress or fraud, mistaken identity or mistaken nature of the ceremony; mentally incapable of understanding the nature and effect of the marriage ceremony.

...Not of marriageable age

- A person is of marriageable age if they have attained the age of 18 years. This has been the marriageable age for both females and males since changes in 1991 (from 16 to 18 for females).
- A person under 16 cannot marry.
- A person between 16-18 may apply to a judge or magistrate in a State or Territory for an order authorising him or her to marry a particular person of marriageable age. The celebrant must ensure the court order has been obtained before agreeing to solemnise the marriage.
- The Act does not permit, under any circumstances, a marriage where both parties are under marriageable age.
- The court order must be forwarded by the celebrant to the appropriate registering authority with the official marriage certificate.
- The court order ceases to have effect after three months.
- In addition to the court order, it is necessary to obtain consent/s (normally from the parents). If the parents refuse, the minor can apply to the judge or magistrate for the judge's or magistrate's consent in place of the parents' consent.
- Consent must be written and must contain name, address, capacity (relation to the party). It must be witnessed and dated by a celebrant or other officials. It is valid for three months.
- It is the parties' responsibility to arrange and supply the court order and consents, **not** the celebrant's.
- It is the celebrant's responsibility to ensure that the court order and consents are produced before the ceremony and are forwarded with the marriage certificate.

It is an offence to solemnise a marriage if the celebrant has reason to believe there is a legal impediment to the marriage or that it would be void.

1.4 The Marriage Ceremony

Time and Place

- Any day, any time, any place in Australia or within Australian territorial waters.
- Marriages in aircraft and ships at sea should be avoided.

Authorised Celebrant

“...*By or in the presence of...*” Often couples request people who are not authorised celebrants to play a part in the ceremony. The celebrant must ensure that:

- The authorised celebrant be present.
- Be a part of the ceremonial group or in close proximity to it.
- Be responsible for ensuring the ceremony is carried out according to law.
- Make their presence as the authorised celebrant known to the congregation.
- Be available to intervene in a meaningful way.
- Sign the papers required by the Act.

Witnesses

- At least two are required under section 44 of the Act; they must be over the age of 18 years.
- It is the responsibility of the couple to provide witnesses. A request that the celebrant supply witnesses might arouse suspicion as to the propriety of the marriage and should not ordinarily be acceded to.

Interpreters

- An interpreter must be a person other than the marrying parties.
- The interpreter must supply a statutory declaration that he/she is able to interpret in the languages in question.

Form of Ceremony

In accordance with Section 45 (1) of the Marriage Act, Ministers of religion may use any form and ceremony recognised as sufficient for the purpose by the religious organisation.

Marriage Certificates

Section 45 of the Act provides that a certificate of the marriage (including Form 15 marriage certificate) prepared and signed in accordance with the Act is conclusive evidence that the marriage was solemnised.

In accordance with Section 50 of the Marriage Act, the celebrant must prepare:

- **An official certificate for registration purposes** (This form has declarations on the back). This is to be sent to the Registry of Births, Deaths, and Marriages. It should be detached from the butt and should be written or printed as legibly as possible. The particulars on the certificate must match exactly with the particulars on the NOIM.
- **A second official certificate.** Most ministers of religion will normally be issued with church marriage registers (Red Book). This entry in the register comprises the second official certificate. Where a register is not used, celebrants may use loose copies of the certificate, but they must be bound together and stored safely and securely. The particulars must match exactly the particulars on the registration copy.
- **A certificate to give to the couple (Form 15)** As of 1 January 2015, celebrants have had to use the new Form 15, which has security features built in the printing stage and a unique identifying number on the back. These certificates are purchased from CanPrint Communications. When you order you must supply your authorization or license number.

1.5 Record keeping

- **Each celebrant must record the number of each Form 15 certificate they are issued with, what happens to the certificate and the date on which it is used.**
- There is a record keeping form supplied with each set of Form 15 certificates. The form must be completed with the celebrant's name and registration number, the serial number on the certificate, the date of use, and how the certificate was used.
- Even if an error is made and the certificate has to be destroyed, you must record this information.
- You may give certificates to other authorised celebrants but all of the above details must be entered in the form.
- If certificates are ever lost or stolen, you must report it immediately to the Celebrants' Section in the Attorney-General's Department.

- The record sheets must be kept with other marriage documents in a secure place for six (6) years.
- You must be prepared to provide the record to the authorities. It is an offence if you do not or cannot.
- It is also an offence to fail to comply with the record keeping obligations.
- Advise the couple that the certificate given to them is a secure document and should be kept in a safe place.
- Celebrants cannot issue any other souvenir certificates with the words “Marriage Certificate” on them. It is fine to give the couple a copy of their vows, etc.
- It is necessary to prepare all three certificates BEFORE the ceremony. In the event that the ceremony does not take place, be sure to record it as “cancelled” in the register and to mark the butt of the registration copy “cancelled.”

Signing the Marriage Certificates

- Both parties, the two witnesses, and the celebrant must all sign each of the three marriage certificates. This must occur immediately after the solemnisation of the marriage.
- The signatures should be the usual signatures and must match the ones in the NOIM.
- The celebrant should write his or her registration number on Form 15 certificate and the second official certificate.
- Immediately after the solemnisation ceremony, hand the signed certificates to someone who can be responsible for them, such as the parents of the bride.

Registration Copy

- In accordance with Section 50 of the Marriage Act, and within 14 days of the ceremony, the celebrant must send to the appropriate State or Territory registering authority the following documents:
 - Certificate for registration (formerly Form 16)
 - NOIM
 - Any order under section 12 of the Act
 - Any statutory declarations, consents, and dispensations with consents.

It is highly advisable to first take copies of orders, statutory declarations, and consents before posting. Post it in the supplied envelope.

Celebrant's Copy (Second Official Certificate)

- This certificate is kept as part of the church marriage register (Red Book).
- The signatures of the couple, the witnesses, and the celebrant are required.

Correction of Errors in Certificates

- If the error has been discovered after the certificates have been prepared and before the ceremony takes place, the notice must first be corrected and then the corrections made in the certificates.
- **Alterations should not be made in the certificate for the parties; a new certificate should be prepared and a record noted of the spoilt certificate.**
- If the errors are discovered after the ceremony but before they are sent to the registration authority, the errors should be indicated in pencil on both official copies, and if necessary a covering letter sent to the registering authority with the registration copy.
- If the errors are discovered after the registration copy, etc, have been sent off, the celebrant should bring any errors to the notice of the registration authority, but should NOT make corrections to his or her copy.
- Under no circumstances should any words be erased (or white-out) when correcting errors. When making a correction, the words to be omitted should be lightly ruled through and others, if necessary, inserted. The corrections should be initialled in the margin opposite.

1.6 Miscellaneous Information

Fees for Solemnising Marriages

- There are no prescribed fees.
- Under the Act it is appropriate for a minister of religion to require or receive a fee for solemnising a marriage
- "However, a minister of religion of a recognised denomination may have his or her name removed from the register if a Registrar of Ministers of Religion is satisfied that the minister has been making a business of solemnising marriages for the purpose of profit or gain."
- See Section 4 for more information.

Statutory Declarations

- The Act in a number of cases requires or permits a statutory declaration to be made. This means a statutory declaration under the Commonwealth Statutory Declarations Act 1959.

- State and Territory statutory declaration forms should not be used for matters relating to a marriage. The proper Commonwealth statutory declaration forms should be used, which can be obtained from any registering authority, legal stationer, or post office.
- A person who willfully makes a false statement in a statutory declaration is guilty of an offence, for which the maximum penalty is four years imprisonment.

Second Marriage Ceremonies

Reasons for married couples to have second ceremonies include:

- Renewal of marriage vows
- To follow a civil ceremony with a religious one
- To have two ceremonies in churches of different denominations
- In these cases of a second ceremony, the celebrant must not prepare or issue a second certificate of marriage under the Act.

Offences Relevant to Celebrants

Section 99 of the Act provides that it is an offence for an authorised marriage celebrant to solemnise a marriage if the celebrant:

- Has any reason to believe the NOIM, the declaration or any statutory declaration supplied contains false statements, an error or is defective.
- Does not handle the NOIM within the prescribed timeframe (or obtain a shortening of time)
- Does not sight the evidence of birth date as required
- Does not complete the parties' declarations
- Does not sight the evidence of the end of any previous marriage by marriage or divorce
- Has not satisfied himself or herself that the parties being wedded are those referred to in the NOIM
- Carries out the marriage without the minimum 2 witnesses over the age of 18 present
- Does not carry out the requirements relating to the use of interpreters
- Performs a marriage ceremony between persons who inform the celebrant that they are already legally married to each other or whom the celebrant knows or has reason to believe are already legally married to each other.

Section 100 provides that it is an offence to solemnise a marriage if the celebrant:

- Has reason to believe that there is a legal impediment to the marriage or has reason to believe the marriage would be void.
- Believes either person is already married to someone else.
- Believes the parties are within a prohibited relationship.
- Believes either is not of marriageable age (and judicial orders and required consents had not been given) or if the consent of either party was not real consent.

Section 101 provides that it is an offence for a person to solemnise a marriage unless the person is authorised by or under the Act.

If you have any questions or uncertainties, it is always best to ring the Department of Justice and Attorney-General for advice. Section Two: Pre-Marriage Counselling

2.1 Purpose

- To build a foundation of godliness, stability, and fortitude into a relationship that will face inevitable pressures and challenges. Strong marriages are the foundation of strong families and help build the Kingdom and bring Glory to God.
- To deal with and unload “emotional baggage” before the marriage begins.
- To equip the couple with vital interpersonal skills and spiritual applications.
- To alert the couple to possible problem areas and put in place strategies to cope, should the need arise.
- To launch the couple into their new future with a plan, a vision, and a blessing.

2.2 Aims and Objectives

No Reasons Against:

Ensure that the couple is marriageable.

- committed, no unsurmountable hindrances (eg., one wants children and the other doesn't, one is a committed Christian, the other is not; etc).

Nature of Marriage:

Ensure that the couple understand what they are entering into.

- Spiritual union, covenant, vows, roles, “till death do us part,” God’s idea of One Flesh v. the World’s idea of marriage as an institution.

Joint Praying:

Teach the couple how to pray together.

- Finding unity, praying with and for each other, the power of a couple praying together, resisting the devil (e.g., beware of competition & hurtful attitudes, submission to God and each other).

Differing Needs, Differing Ways:

His needs and ways; her needs and ways.

- He needs respect and sexual expression.
- She needs security, tenderness, and sexual intimacy.
- It's not that simple! Take off their blinkers a little bit if they seem too naïve about the challenges that may lay ahead, without being too negative.

Communication:

Equip with good communication strategies.

- Importance of being open and honest (not “wearing a mask” or “playing a part” or “playing games”).
- Teach Active Listening, Empathy, “I” statements and, if necessary, how to apologise, how to back down, how to agree to disagree.
- Identify Negative Communication Strategies: manipulation, coercion, playing victim, sulking, “the silent treatment,” etc.

Red Flags and Warning Lights:

Warn about hidden dangers and unexpected complications.

- finances, family pressures, sexual issues, differing ideas on child rearing, dangers of credit and debt, and, if relevant, the very tricky issues that occur in blended (step-) families.

Problem Solving:

Prepare the couple with strategies for facing challenges.

- Forgiveness.
- Conflict resolution & de-escalation strategies.
- The power of words.
- Keeping the love-light burning.

Cleaning the Slate:

Spiritual discernment and warfare to deal with issues from past relationships

- Inner vows, soul ties, hurts, previous emotional ties and sexual activity, scars from parents' divorce, etc.

Formulating a One-Flesh Vision

- Finding the convergence point in two-person visions to form a single vision for the couple's future

Blessing the Couple

Speaking edification, strength, fortitude, hope, peace, and prosperity over the couple to empower them to prosper in their future.

2.3 Ideas to consider during the Pre-Marriage Counselling period

- Encourage them each to keep a journal (guided or free) for the duration of the course. In it they write their innermost hopes, dreams, and fears; they then share the journals with each other. This encourages a new level of intimacy and sharing.
- Challenge the couple to pray together each day, even over the phone at the end of the day. This encourages a new habit.
- Use questionnaires at the beginning of the course and at the end of the course so the couple can see where they have grown and where their ideas have shifted.
- At the completion of the course, have each of them separately write a letter to the other, expressing their hopes, dreams, and love. Encourage them to save the letters for their first anniversary.

Section Three: Planning the Service**3.1 Style of ceremony**

- Contemporary or Traditional
- Quick and to the point or elaborate and involved

3.2 Items to be considered for inclusion in ceremony

- Communion
- Candle lighting/ropes/sand in jars, i.e. symbolism of their union
- Special scriptures

- Hymns
- Speaking by family or friends

3.3 Family Members and Participants

- Get names (correct spellings and, if necessary, pronunciations).
- Find out if parents are divorced and who is remarried. (A *genogram* is useful here; it is simply a hand-drawn diagram of who is related to whom. Just put it in the couple's file till after the ceremony.)
- If a special family member (eg., mother of the bride) is deceased, the couple may like to "include" them in some way, like a photo posted somewhere or a mention by the pastor.

3.4 Order of Service

- Keep a few copies of bulletins from previous weddings to show the couple some options.
- To generate ideas, ask them if they have been to a wedding that they really liked and why they liked it.
- Find out if they want the church to produce a printed Order of Service.

3.5 Music

- The couple may have ideas of songs they really want to play or have performed; if not, you can find a comprehensive list of wedding songs on the internet at places such as <http://www.ourweddingsongs.com/>

3.6 Rehearsal

- Usually the rehearsal is a day or two before the ceremony, when all of the necessary participants are in town.
- Tell the Bride and Groom it is their responsibility to have everyone at the rehearsal on time.
- Have blank name tags for everyone; chances are you will not know many of them.

Suggestions for Making the Rehearsal Smooth

Take charge early in the evening, so proceedings do not get ambushed by well-meaning (but possibly nervous, confused or pushy) people. Here is a good set of rules:

1. Seat everyone.
2. Pray.
3. Introduce the Bride and Groom, the Parents, the Party. Have them sit again.
4. “We want this to run smoothly, so we have a schedule to stick to. Now, while we are seated, is the best time to ask your questions.”
5. 5-Minute verbal run through of the wedding, with everyone seated. You (or an assistant) can move about to demonstrate positions. Give everyone a printed outline.
6. Run through and discuss the wedding, encouraging everyone to remember their starting point, their path, their partner, their participation cue, and their finishing point.
7. Do a final run through.
8. Seat everyone and give instructions:
 - Are duties clear?
 - Who is in charge on the day (usually a Host or Hostess)
 - Time to be at the church.

Special instructions

- “If anyone makes a mistake it will probably be me. If I make one, I’ll keep going. You do the same.”
 - Photo, music and video instructions (when and where).
 - Wedding party should avoid “locking their knees” while standing.
9. Close in prayer.
 10. Any final documents to sign or to witness?
 11. Payment of fees (musicians, sound, etc) should be in by now.

Section Four: Fees

The Attorney-General’s Office does not set a recommended fee for marriage celebrants. Ministers of Religion are permitted to charge but must not be seen to be making a business of

or profiting from solemnising marriages. There is an expectation that regardless of the fee, the couples receive a good standard of service and professionalism.

If your church has a standard fee, then by all means abide by that. If you have not been “charging” for weddings, but would like to consider it, here are a few things to factor in.

4.1 Building hire

If the couple is using the church premises, it is acceptable to charge a fee for its use. This can be attributed to insurance costs, use of electricity, water, administrative support (order of service, handling of documents, etc), cleaning and amenities.

For example, a very new, modern church auditorium on the north side of Brisbane has as its venue hire for weddings \$500.

4.2 Services to be rendered

Sound and Lighting:

The wedding may require special lighting and a sound system to amplify voices and play recorded music. If a technician is required, your church may want to set a standard fee to cover his or her time. Bear in mind that the sound person should be present at the rehearsal to learn the cues. You can negotiate this with the technician.

Music:

Does the couple want live music? Your music team or choir may be available and willing, but otherwise a pianist may need to be hired. It is appropriate to have a list of names and fees to give to the couple. Or they can source one themselves.

Car Park Attendants:

If it is a large wedding, you may require car park attendants. If volunteers are not available, the couple may need to hire a few. Again, you can have a list of names and a suggested fee.

Catering:

If the church hall is being used for the reception and a catering team is required this is another thing to consider. Have on file names of willing volunteers and those who would receive a fee. The couple can, of course, source their own.

Decorations:

The couple should appoint a wedding decorator. The celebrant may be able to recommend someone from the church. Ideas for the decorating should be completely agreed upon by the rehearsal. However, the set up of the room may not be possible until much closer to the actual service, depending on the use of the room for other purposes.

Cleaning and Re-Set:

The venue should be left as it was found, or else professional cleaners hired to effect cleaning and reset. If furniture needs to be in a certain position, be sure to provide a 'map' of positioning of all furniture. Other sundry items used and or moved should be replaced to their normal positions. Remember that weddings usually take place on Saturday, your church set-up team are not responsible for cleaning up after a wedding or other function.

4.3 Celebrant's Fee

It is acceptable for a celebrant to receive payment for their services.

Remember the time you are investing into this service:

- Approximately 3 hours of initial and planning meetings,
- between 3 and 10 hours of premarital counselling (depending on the number of sessions),
- follow-up phone calls,
- around 2 hours for the rehearsal, and
- a large chunk of a day for the actual ceremony.

That totals to between 12 and 20 hours for one wedding. Imagine if the couple had to pay a lawyer for these same services (at \$250 per hour!!)

A Suggested Fee

At the same time, we need to recognise that our time and expertise is valuable. We feel \$200 is a very acceptable, minimum fee. If you are required to drive a long distance (for example, more than 50 km), it is also appropriate to require a distance fee.

A ring around several churches in southeast Queensland showed a variety of fees, ranging from \$0 (no fee) to \$1,500.

For the Sake of Comparison...

Non-religious celebrants in Australia charge on average between \$400 to \$800 This covers their services (usually 2 meetings, unlimited phone consultations, a personalised, "original" service, completing and lodging forms, travel, use of their PA equipment and ceremonial items, the rehearsal and the ceremony.

Section Five: Presentation & Demeanour

5.1 Dress Standards

Male Celebrants

Take your lead from the couple. If they are having a very formal, traditional wedding, the safest bet is to wear a dark suit and dark, polished shoes. Black or charcoal is better than brown. It is a very nice touch to match your tie and shirt with the wedding party.

In case of an informal wedding (garden or beach), discuss with the couple their expectations.

Female Celebrants

Take your lead from the couple.

Remember for outdoor weddings that thin heels can sink into soft ground. Jewellery, accessories, and make-up should be classic and minimal, do not upstage the bride. If it is an outdoor occasion, be sure to factor in the possibility of wind and strong breezes when choosing your outfit and hairstyle.

Remember Whom You are Representing...

Your image will be gracing their photos for posterity; you don't want them to cringe every time they look at them. Thou shall **not** have:

- Suits that are ill-fitting (see a good tailor)
- Shoes that are not spic and span
- Shirt sleeves poking out of jacket sleeves
- Ties that are not straight or tied sloppily
- Stockings with run
- Heels that are worn down and in need of repair
- Loose strings, lint, stains, pet hair
- Hair that is unkempt, a "shaggy neck", or facial stubble.

5.2 Tips and Nice Touches

- Carry two clean hankies, one for you if you begin to perspire and one for the bride or groom if they should get teary.
- Keep breath mints in your pocket (not the rattly ones!) The bride and groom will probably appreciate one as they stand in the receiving line after the service.
- If you want to be truly prepared, smelling salts may come in handy for wilting brides or fainting grooms.
- A spare pen--just in case the one on the registry table fails.

Section Six: Community Outreach & Miscellaneous Items

6.1 A Door for the Gospel

Providing wedding services is a wonderful tool for reaching into the community. Imagine running an ad a couple of times a year in the local paper, advertising the services your church offers. Is your church set up to provide:

- Pre-marriage counselling, individual or small group?
- Wedding planning?
- Lovely chapel or garden weddings?
- “Catered” afternoon tea receptions?

There may be people in your community who are looking for a place to have a quiet, simple wedding. What a great opportunity to reach the community with the love of God! You will meet and serve the couple--AND their extended families--and have an opportunity to share the Gospel. This can be a real ministry of people in your church to the community. Just like churches have street witnessing teams and nursing home visiting teams, why not a community wedding team?

For these types of ceremonies, as opposed to regular members of your congregation, you should be up front and advise the couple that as a religious (not civil) celebrant you wish to pray for them as part of the ceremony. You may also want to include references to God as the author of marriage as discussed earlier.

6.2 Marriage Enrichment seminars

- Marriage Enhancement Seminars (concluding with a Recommitment Service)
- Regular *Better Communication Workshops* (for couples who are struggling)
- Pre-Marriage Courses.

- Honour long-term marriages in your church or local community by writing feature articles for your local paper. Maybe include a picture of the pastor and spouse giving a bouquet or memento to the couple.
- Make a list of good Christian counsellors to whom you can refer couples who are experiencing difficulties. Be sure to talk to the counsellors and understand their

doctrine first. A recommendation from someone who has been to them is advisable before you refer anyone to them

6.3 Recommitment of vows ceremonies

Recommitment of vows ceremonies for couples who have been married for perhaps a milestone of 20 years may wish to carry out such a service to re-affirm their vows to each other and their friends and families.

Section Seven: Resources

Free to Copy Documents

7.1 Celebrant's Checklist for marriage paperwork

Couple's names	M:	F:
Current Addresses		
Phone Numbers	H: M:	H: M:
Birth Dates & Places	Evidence sighted?	Evidence sighted?
Current Ages	Under 18? Y N	Under 18? Y N
Only one person can be under 18	Court Order Required?	Consent Required?
Conjugal Status	Evidence sighted:	Evidence sighted:
NOIM	Each question completed? Noting of Birth certificates Clear writing/printing Notation of transfer (where necessary) Rites of ceremony (The Full Gospel Churches of Australia) Date lodged?	Permission to photocopy for records, documents?
Record Keeping	Form filled in with certificate number/s and details of use? Register returned?	Set up a file for each couple including copies of letters, order of service, checklist, etc.
Pre-Marriage Counselling	Gave brochure <i>Happily Ever After & Before?</i> Pre-marriage counselling Number of sessions	Pre-wedding planning appointments Number of sessions Dates Date and Time of Rehearsal

	Dates	
Confirmation Letter to couple	To be sent after the details of the wedding are agreed upon. Stating: services offered, fees charged, payment dates, etc. Date Sent:	Fees to be charged: Celebrant..... Distance..... Venue..... Inclusions Total..... Total:
Inclusions:	Order of service brochure Power Point	Sound/media: Pianist: Audio/video recording:
Documents to Take to Ceremony	Official Certificate Church Register Couple's certificate & envelope 2 Pens Who will received the completed certificate at the wedding?	Declaration of Conjugal status completed prior to ceremony? Signed by celebrant, parties, witnesses?
Certificates of Marriage	Signed by celebrant, parties, and witnesses? Declarations to conjugal status completed and signed? Celebrant's initials near crossed out matters? Full name of witnesses in block letters? Rites of Ceremony noted? Form 15 serial number and use noted on record keeping form?	Abbreviations not used? Writing is clear Alterations and corrections initialled?
Collection of Important Info	Names of parents of the bride and groom (Accurately spelt) B: G:	Proposed ceremony date: Address of venue Names and spellings of wedding party

<p>Date for lodgement</p> <hr/> <p>14 days after ceremony</p>	Final Check of Documents	<p>Include:</p> <p>NOIM</p> <p>Official Marriage Certificate</p> <p>If applicable: Court order, parents' consent, interpreter's certificate, other relevant documents</p>
Follow Up Letter	Receipt, date of posting of documents, well wishing	Date sent:

7.2 Marriage documents timeline

18 months - 1 calendar month before the ceremony	Complete and date NOIM
Less than one month	Ring the Registering authority to shorten the 1 month time for notice. (Celebrant should make sure the NOIM is in order and give it to the parties, who will need to contact or visit the Registering Authority)
No more than 3 months before the ceremony	Court Orders and parental consent for a person under 18
From one week & up to one day before the ceremony	<p>Declaration of Conjugal Status (back of the registration certificate;</p> <p>Marriage Certificates Prepared and checked against the NOIM (same spellings and answers)</p>
Immediately after the solemnisation ceremony	<p>Signatures of parties, witnesses, and celebrants on all three certificates</p> <p>Interpreter's certificate (if applicable)</p>
Up to 14 days after the ceremony	Mail documents to the Registering body
After 6 years	Records can be destroyed

7.3 Marriage Ceremony sample checklist

Celebrant confirmed?

Organising Checklist

1. Venue – How easy to find? Need a map?
2. Chairs – how many?
3. Outdoors? – Cover/Marquis; Red Carpet?
4. PA and sound equipment in venue.
5. Pew or Chair decorations.
6. Wedding Bulletins
7. Ushers
8. Marriage Ceremony chosen (Words and Vows) – There are only two things that must be in the words of a marriage ceremony
 - (a) A Just Cause Clause – “If any man can show a just cause why these two should not be lawfully joined in marriage – let them now speak or else forever hold their peace”
 - (b) A reference to a lifelong commitment.
9. Flowers at the Ceremony if desired.
10. Music as you walk up the aisle (Bridal March)
11. Who Stands Where?
12. Someone giving the bride away?
13. Solo items –
 - a. Singer
 - b. A reading (poem, verse, or prose piece)
14. Table for signing the register
15. For Christian Couples – Will you take communion?
16. Cloth and/or Table piece for signing table.
17. Music or item during signing
18. Music to go out as a married couple (Wedding March)

7.4 Service planning template

Couple _____

Date of ceremony _ _____

Arrival – Procession

Fashionably late?

Music Chosen?

Attendants, page boys/girls, ring bearers,

Who stands Where? Bride and Groom face – FThe Ministert Congregation side on

Which ceremony chosen?

Welcome

Celebrant prays?

Recognise special guests present / not present

Giving Away

Just Cause XXX

Father? Brother? Another?

Bible Reading –

Any readings? Musical Items? Special ceremonies?

The Asking

Do you take? I Do.

Vows

Written – Completed?

Memorise or lead the couple?

Rings

Special Ceremonies

Candles, Cords, Coins, Doves, Parents involved,

Kisses

Prayer for the Couple?

Message/homily

Communion?

Sign the Register - Music chosen?

Music – to go out with.

Presentation of Bride and Groom

Names preferred.

7.5 Order of Service template

Order of Service

Arrival - Procession

Welcome

Giving Away

Bible Reading – Homily

Just Cause

The Asking

Vows

Rings

Kisses

Prayer for the Couple

Message/homily

Sign the Register

Music -

Presentation of Bride and Groom

7.6 Examples of official forms (not to be copied)

Figure 1: Notice of Intended Marriage Form Pg 1



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Marriage Act 1961

**NOTICE OF
INTENDED MARRIAGE**

Note: See regulation 38 *Marriage Regulations 1963* (Cth).

Please read all NOTES (including PRIVACY NOTES) included in this form, and
complete this form in TYPE or by using BLOCK LETTERS.

Figure 2: Notice of Intended Marriage Form Pg 2

PRIVACY NOTES

- Section 42 of the *Marriage Act 1961* (the Act) requires that a marriage shall not be solemnised unless a notice in writing of the intended marriage, in the prescribed form, is given to the authorised celebrant solemnising the marriage. This Notice is the prescribed form for this purpose.
- The authorised celebrant to whom the Notice is given sends the Notice to the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages of the State or Territory in which the marriage takes place, after the marriage ceremony. The Registrar uses the information in the Notice to register the marriage.
- The Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages then sends the Notice to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (the ABS), which requests information about these matters under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. The ABS records non-identifying information from the Notice, including each party's sex, and uses that information to generate national statistics on marriage and the family in Australia. Personal identifying information is not retained.

NOTES

MARRIAGE OF ANY PERSON UNDER 18 YEARS WITHOUT AN ORDER OF A JUDGE OR MAGISTRATE IS INVALID.

UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES CAN 2 PERSONS UNDER 18 YEARS MARRY EACH OTHER.

- 1 A party to an intended marriage who is unable, after reasonable inquiry, to state any information required in the Notice, should write "unknown" in the relevant space on the form. To make the Notice effective, the party must also give the authorised celebrant a statutory declaration stating that they are unable to state the information required in the Notice, and the reason for that inability. However, a statutory declaration is not necessary in relation to the information required under item 9, 10, 11 or 12 of the Notice, or the *date* of a previous marriage ceremony under item 14 of the Notice.
- 2 The marriage cannot be solemnised until after one calendar month from the date the authorised celebrant receives the Notice unless, under subsection 42(5) of the Act, a prescribed authority has authorised the marriage to be solemnised before that time has elapsed. Also, the marriage cannot be solemnised:
 - (a) if the authorised celebrant receives the Notice more than 18 months before the proposed marriage (see paragraph 42(1)(a) of the Act); and
 - (b) unless the authorised celebrant is satisfied that the parties to the proposed marriage are the parties referred to in the notice given under section 42 of the Act in relation to the marriage (see paragraph 42(8)(a) of the Act).
- 3 Section 104 of the Act makes it an offence for a person to give the Notice to an authorised celebrant or to sign it if, to that person's knowledge, the Notice contains a false statement or an error or is defective.
- 4 If a party to an intended marriage cannot conveniently sign the Notice at the time it is intended to give notice of the intended marriage, the other party may sign the Notice and give it to the proposed authorised celebrant. However, in that case, the party who has not signed the Notice must sign it in the presence of that celebrant or another authorised celebrant before the marriage is solemnised.
- 5 Section 42 of the Act requires certain documents to be produced to the authorised celebrant before the marriage is solemnised, in particular:
 - (a) evidence of the date and place of birth of each party; and
 - (b) if a party has previously been legally married, evidence of a party's divorce, or of the death of a party's spouse.If a party has been divorced in Australia, the authorised celebrant should sight court evidence of the decree upon dissolution of marriage.
- 6 A party to an intended marriage who has not turned 18 (unless the party has previously been married), must obtain the necessary consents or dispensations required under the Act, and the authorised celebrant must sight those consents or dispensations before proceeding with the marriage. Also, a person under 18 years is not of marriageable age, and cannot be a party to a marriage, unless the person obtains an order from the court under section 12 of the Act.

Figure 3: Notice of Intended Marriage Form Pg 3

<p style="text-align: center;">FOR CELEBRANT'S USE</p> <p>Marriage arranged: for: _____ am/pm <small>(time)</small></p> <p>on: _____ <small>(day of week)</small></p> <p>_____ <small>(date)</small></p> <p>at: _____</p>	<p>Commonwealth of Australia <i>Marriage Act 1961</i></p> <p>NOTICE OF INTENDED MARRIAGE</p> <p>To: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p><small>[insert name and address of proposed celebrant]</small></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY</p> <p>Registered No. _____</p>
--	--	---

The following parties give notice of their intended marriage:

	PARTY 1	PARTY 2												
1 Description of party	Groom <input type="checkbox"/> Bride <input type="checkbox"/> Partner <input type="checkbox"/>	Groom <input type="checkbox"/> Bride <input type="checkbox"/> Partner <input type="checkbox"/>												
2 Surname	_____	_____												
3 Given names	_____	_____												
4 Sex <small>('X' refers to indeterminate/intersex/unspecified)</small>	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/>	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> X <input type="checkbox"/>												
5 Usual occupation	_____	_____												
6 Usual place of residence <small>(full address)</small>	_____	_____												
7 Conjugal status <small>(for example, never validly married, widowed, divorced)</small>	_____	_____												
8 Birthplace— <small>(if born in Australia— insert city or town, and State or Territory; if born outside Australia— insert city or town and country)</small>	_____	_____												
9 Date of birth	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Day</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Month</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Year</td> </tr> </table>	_____	_____	_____	Day	Month	Year	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Day</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Month</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Year</td> </tr> </table>	_____	_____	_____	Day	Month	Year
_____	_____	_____												
Day	Month	Year												
_____	_____	_____												
Day	Month	Year												
10 If party born outside Australia, total period of residence in Australia	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Years</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Months</td> </tr> </table>	_____	_____	Years	Months	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 50%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Years</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Months</td> </tr> </table>	_____	_____	Years	Months				
_____	_____													
Years	Months													
_____	_____													
Years	Months													
11 Father's name in full <small>(If not known, write "unknown". If deceased, add "deceased")</small>	_____	_____												
12 Mother's maiden name in full <small>(If not known, write "unknown". If deceased, add "deceased")</small>	_____	_____												
13 Father's country of birth <small>(If not known, write "unknown")</small>	_____	_____												
14 Mother's country of birth <small>(If not known, write "unknown")</small>	_____	_____												

If a party has been previously married, that party must give the following particulars:

15 Number of previous marriages	_____	_____												
16 Year of each previous marriage ceremony <small>(If known, give date)</small>	_____	_____												
17 Number of children of the previous marriage or marriages born alive <small>(whether now living or deceased)</small>	_____	_____												
18 Year of birth of each of those children	_____	_____												
19 How LAST marriage terminated <small>(Insert "death", "divorce" or "nullity")</small>	_____	_____												
20 Date on which last spouse died, or date on which dissolution of last marriage became final, or nullity order made	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Day</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Month</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Year</td> </tr> </table>	_____	_____	_____	Day	Month	Year	<table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> <td style="width: 33%; border: 1px solid black;">_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Day</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Month</td> <td style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">Year</td> </tr> </table>	_____	_____	_____	Day	Month	Year
_____	_____	_____												
Day	Month	Year												
_____	_____	_____												
Day	Month	Year												

Figure 4: Notice of Intended Marriage Form Pg 4

Are the parties related to each other? Yes No

If yes, state relationship

Signature of party 1

Signature of party 2

Signature of witness*

Signature of witness*

Qualification

Qualification

Date: / /

Date: / /

* This Notice must be signed in the presence of any of the following:

(a) if a party signs the Notice in Australia—an authorised celebrant, a Commissioner for Declarations under the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959*, a justice of the peace, a barrister or solicitor, a legally qualified medical practitioner, or a member of the Australian Federal Police or the police force of a State or Territory;

(b) if a party signs the Notice outside Australia—an Australian Consular Officer, an Australian Diplomatic Officer, a notary public, an employee of the Commonwealth authorised under paragraph 3(c) of the *Consular Fees Act 1955*, or an employee of the Australian Trade Commission authorised under paragraph 3(d) of the *Consular Fees Act 1955*.

Note: For the definitions of *Australian Consular Officer* and *Australian Diplomatic Officer*, see section 2 of the *Consular Fees Act 1955*.

PARTICULARS TO BE COMPLETED BY AUTHORISED CELEBRANT

Date notice received by celebrant

Rites used

Place marriage solemnised

Date marriage solemnised

* Strike out words not required
† Strike out if inapplicable

	PARTY 1	PARTY 2
Birth certificate(s) produced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Registration number of birth certificate	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
* Statutory declaration(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Australian† or foreign† passport produced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Passport number	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
# Current drivers licence produced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drivers licence number	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
# Current proof of age card or evidence of age card produced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proof of age card number or evidence of age card number	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
# Current identification card displaying the cardholder's photograph produced	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Type of identification card	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Number of identification card	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

† Evidence of * death, * nullity or * dissolution

‡ For marriage of a party under 18 years:
- consents received
- court approval

Authority for marriage despite late notice

- not applicable

Note: For use if photographic evidence of identity is sighted by the authorised celebrant to satisfy the requirements under paragraph 42(8)(a) of the Act.

Have you given the document referred to in subsection 42(5A) of the Act to the parties?

Celebrant's number	Celebrant's signature
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Official use only

Figure 6: Commemorative Marriage certificate



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
Marriage Act 1961

Certificate of Marriage

I,

having authority under the *Marriage Act 1961* to solemnise marriages, hereby certify that I have this day at

duly solemnised marriage in accordance with the provisions of that Act and according to

the rites of

between

and

in the presence of the undersigned witnesses.

Dated this day of in the year

.....
Signatures of Parties to the Marriage

.....
Signatures of Witnesses to the Marriage

.....
Signature of Celebrant

.....
BRIDE

.....
WITNESS

.....
BRIDEGROOM

.....
WITNESS

Figure 8: Church Register Marriage Certificate

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

Marriage Act 1961

OFFICIAL CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE

paragraph 50(1)(b) Marriage Act 1961 (Cth)

Marriage was solemnised between the parties, details of whom are given below, on the.....
 day of....., 20.....;

at _____
(location of marriage ceremony)

*(according to the rites of.....).

Detail	Bridegroom	Bride
Surname		
Other names		
Usual occupation		
Usual place of residence		
Conjugal status		
Birthplace		
Date of Birth		
Father's name in full		
Mother's maiden name in full		

Signatures of Parties to the Marriage } _____

Witnesses to the Marriage

Full names _____

Signatures _____

I, _____
(full name)

certify that, on the date and at the place specified above, I duly solemnised marriage in accordance with the provisions of the *Marriage Act 1961* between the parties specified above.

Dated this _____ day of _____
(day) (month) (year)

(Signature of Celebrant)

*The words in brackets may be omitted

7.7 Helpful books/resource material

General Knowledge Materials

The Wedding Collection, by Morris H. Chapman

A Contemporary Handbook for Weddings & Funerals, by Aubrey Malphurs & Keith White, Kregel Publications, 2001.

Divorce & Remarriage in the Church: Biblical Solutions for Pastoral Realities, by David Instone-Brewer, Paternoster Press, 2004.

His Needs, Her Needs, by Willard F Harley.

Love & Respect, by Emerson Eggerichs.

101 Questions To Ask Before You Get Engaged, by Wright H Norman.

The Five Love Languages, by Gary Chapman

Pre-Marriage Materials

Covenant Partners: A Pre-Marriage Course, by Ps Shaun Marler, World Harvest Ministries, 2004.

Before "I Do": Preparing for the Full Marriage Experience, by Jason Krafsky, Turn the Tide Resource Group, 2005.

Preparing For Marriage, by Dennis Rainey. Includes Leader's Manual and couple's book.

Highly Recommended:

Starter Pack (Marriage Preparation Course) by Nicky Lee, Sila Lee. The aim of the Marriage Preparation Course is to help couples lay the foundations for a relationship that will last a lifetime. This Starter Kit includes: the Marriage Preparation Course 2 DVD set; Leader's and Support Couples' Guide; Speakers' Notes CD-ROM; six Guest Manuals; and a copy of The Marriage Book. Available from KooThe Ministery Books \$150.

7.8 Authorised Rites of Marriage

The following marriage rites is the authorised form of The Full Gospel Churches of Australia. This form is to be used by ministers of The Full Gospel Churches of Australia in any marriage ceremony conducted by them. However, certain variations are provided and/or allowed, to encourage celebrants to be responsive to the desires and needs of the man and woman to be married, and to accommodate the content of their choosing where appropriate.

In adapting these rites, we draw attention to certain non-negotiable aspects of the content of the ceremony:

- a) At some point in the ceremony, it is legally required that vows be made, such as, “I, A.B, take you, B.C, as my lawful wife/husband” or similar.
- b) The ceremony is to be carried out in a Christian context, including such content as is agreeable to the beliefs of The Full Gospel Churches of Australia.
- c) The Full Gospel Churches of Australia holds to a traditional view of marriage in that it is the covenant by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership for the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring.

7.8.1 Wedding Vows

Marriage Rites of The Full Gospel Churches of Australia The Marriage Ceremony

Welcome

The Celebrant warmly welcomes the congregation and invites them to share in the service as fully as possible.

Example:

“Relatives and friends of *Man’s Christian Name* and *Woman’s Christian Name*, we have come together today to witness the marriage of *Man’s Christian Name* and *Woman’s Christian Name*. We begin this ceremony by worshipping God in song...

Praise and Worship

A time of praise and worship may be led by the celebrant or worship leader.

Opening Blessing

Thanking the Lord for this man and woman, and their decision for marriage.

Example

Almighty God, we thank you that *Man’s Christian Name* and *Woman’s Christian Name* have experienced your grace and goodness and have been led by your Spirit to this point in their lives where they desire to enter the covenant of marriage.

We ask you to bless this man and woman who are standing here in your presence and in the presence of these witnesses as they enter the Covenant of Marriage. Amen.

The Word

At this point (or later in the Ceremony), a Bible reading and appropriate comments from the Celebrant relating to Christian marriage may take place.

2

Celebrant's Introduction

The Celebrant introduces the ceremony stating the purpose for the gathering and a Christian understanding of what marriage is.

Example

"We are gathered together here in the sight of God and of this congregation, to join together this man, *Man's Full Name*, and this woman, *Woman's Full Name*, in holy matrimony. Marriage is an honourable estate instituted by God and is a life-long commitment between a man and a woman. Almighty God Himself is the author. Therefore, it is not to be entered into lightly but reverently and soberly in the fear of God. *Man's Christian Name* and *Woman's Christian Name* come now to be joined in this holy relationship."

Declaration of Intention

The Man and Woman are asked to publicly state their intentions

(To the Groom) "Will you, *Man's Full Name*, take this woman to be your lawful wife and forsaking all others will you be faithful to her for as long as you both live?"

Groom "I will."

(To the Bride) "Will you, *Woman's Full Name*, take this man to be your lawful husband and forsaking all others will you be faithful to him for as long as you both live?"

Bride "I will."

(To the Father of the Bride)

"Who gives this woman to be married to this man?"

Father of Bride "I do." **Vows - Celebrant to Groom**

The vows may be taken in the following ways

- (a) *The couple may simply answer the Celebrant's questions as in the example below.*
- (b) *The couple may repeat appropriate vows after the Celebrant.*
- (c) *The couple may read or say appropriate vows to each other.*

"Therefore, knowing this, will you join your right hands please.

Example

Do you, *Man's Full Name*, in the presence of Almighty God and these witnesses, take *Woman's Full Name*, to be your wife? Do you promise to love, cherish and protect her and provide for her in health and in sickness? Do you promise to be true to her, forsaking all others, and cleaving to her for as long as you both live?"

Groom "I do."

Celebrant to Bride.

Do you, *Woman's Full Name*, in the presence of Almighty God and these witnesses, take *Man's Full Name*, to be your husband? Do you promise to love, cherish and honour him in health and in sickness? Do you promise to be true and faithful to him, forsaking all others and cleaving to him for as long as you both live?"

Bride "I do."

Ring Ceremony

At this point in the ceremony rings may be given or exchanged.

The Celebrant receives the rings**Example**

"These rings are a sign and seal of your marriage bond. Having neither beginning nor end, they are to be a constant reminder to you of God's never-ending love for you and of your vows of lifelong devotion to each other."

Groom

"*Woman's Christian Name*, I give you this ring as a sign of my love and as a seal of our marriage bond."

Bride

"*Man's Christian Name*, I give you this ring as a sign of my love and as a seal of our marriage bond."

The Declaration of Marriage

The Bride and Groom again join their right hands while the Celebrant says:

Celebrant

"Since , *Man's Full Name* and *Woman's Full Name* have consented to live together in holy marriage making vows to each other before God and this congregation and giving ring/s as a sign of those vows, I pronounce them to be husband and wife, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

(To the congregation)

Those whom God has joined together, let no one separate."

(The couple may wish to seal their marriage with a kiss at this point.)

Dedicatory Prayer

Couple join hands and kneel at the altar. This is the opportune time for the Celebrant and elders to lay hands on and pray for the newly married couple.

(Option - Communion with couple only)

Celebrant

"Man's Christian Name and Woman's Christian Name have chosen to begin their marriage with the Lord's supper. They do this to express their desire to commence their walk together acknowledging Jesus as the centre of their life and marriage."

The couple now sit on the platform awaiting the Celebrant's remarks.

Song

Celebrant's Remarks

If this has not been done earlier in the service (see The Word) then at this point, a Bible reading and appropriate remarks from the Celebrant relating to Christian marriage may take place.

It is preferable that God's Word is reflected on earlier in the service, prior to the taking of vows.

Signing of Register

While the register is being signed, a song leader may lead congregational singing, or a soloist may sing or play.

Celebrant

Introduction to congregation of new couple.

Exit Song or Music.