

## **WEDDINGS AT THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD, LAKE TEKAPO**

### ***INFORMATION FOR COUPLES WISHING TO BE MARRIED IN THE CHURCH OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD***

***Please read through the following information carefully. It contains important details on how to arrange for your wedding at the Church of the Good Shepherd.***

Weddings can be conducted at other locations by arrangement.

Please send all Applications in the first instance to:

Church Administrator  
admin@mackenziechurch.org.nz

### **INFORMATION**

This information sheet includes:

- Booking Procedure
- Planning your Service
- Marriage Preparation
- Applying for a Marriage License
- Fees
- Application Form
- Music Form
- Wedding Services
- Additional information when having a Wedding in the Church of the Good Shepherd.

### **Wedding Ceremonies**

The Church of the Good Shepherd has set a limit to how many Wedding Ceremonies the local minister can conduct each year. If you are members of a church and have a minister, priest or pastor able to officiate at your wedding please indicate that on your Application Form.

### **Using a Wedding Company or Wedding Planners**

We do not accept applications made by Wedding Companies or Planners on behalf of couples. You may like to employ a Wedding Planner to assist you with other aspects of your wedding celebration, but we require all couples to apply directly to the Mackenzie Church to arrange the marriage and the ceremony itself.

If we can help answer your wedding questions with regard to other aspects of your arrangements or if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us.

### **Christian Marriage Blessing.**

Occasionally married couples ask for a Christian Marriage Blessing at the Church of the Good Shepherd. There are various reasons for this:

If couples from overseas marry in a civil ceremony in their home country, it avoids the complication of applying for Marriage Licenses in New Zealand. Other times couples have married overseas and want to share their marriage vows with friends and family in New Zealand.

In either of these situations couples may have a service of Christian Marriage Blessing at the Church of the Good Shepherd. A special service for this is available in our marriage ceremony book.

Couples who have been married for many years or celebrating an anniversary may want to renew their vows in a Christian ceremony.

As with the Marriage Ceremony these services are at the discretion of the Minister in Charge of the Mackenzie Parish and are approved and conducted on a case-by-case basis. Please contact the Administrator.

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## **1. THE CHURCH**

The Church of the Good Shepherd was built in 1935 as a memorial to the pioneer families of the Mackenzie. While it is vested in the Anglican Church, it has always been used by the various denominations in the Mackenzie area and is one of three churches in the Mackenzie Co-operating Parish.

### **DO I NEED TO BE BAPTISED TO BE MARRIED IN THE CHURCH?**

It is a requirement of the church that at least one of the couple be a baptised member of a church.

We do make exceptions for couples who identify as Christian or who demonstrate a sympathetic understanding of the Christian faith.

## **2. WHO CAN TAKE A WEDDING IN THE CHURCH?**

The Church may only be used by ordained Christian Clergy who are NZ Registered. Civil Marriage celebrants are not permitted to perform Services in the Church.

The Minister of the Mackenzie Co-operating Parish is responsible for all those officiating weddings in the church.

If you have prepared for marriage with the support of your family Minister, Priest or Pastor and would like them to take your wedding at the Church of the Good Shepherd please let us know. This can be arranged at the discretion of the Minister of the Mackenzie Co-operating Parish.

## **3. POLICY ON SAME SEX MARRIAGE OR MARRIAGE BLESSINGS**

The Church of the Good Shepherd is part of the Mackenzie Cooperating Parish, with oversight from Anglican and Presbyterian churches. The Anglican church and the Presbyterian churches continue to uphold the traditional Christian understanding of marriage “as the loving, faithful union of a man and a woman” while allowing blessing of same-sex marriages in parishes who are of one heart and mind concerning such blessings. We appreciate this is a heartfelt issue, but as a local church we are committed to the church's traditional teaching on marriage as between one man and one woman for life and therefore unable to provide such blessings.

There are a number of local marriage celebrants who may be able to conduct services for same-sex couples at other locations around Mackenzie area and if required we can help you contact them.

## 4. BOOKING THE CHURCH FOR YOUR WEDDING

### a. Deciding on a date

*To confirm the availability of your preferred date and time please email:*

[admin@mackenziechurch.org.nz](mailto:admin@mackenziechurch.org.nz)

When choosing your date and time please keep in mind that the Minister will also wish to meet with you for a pre-wedding meeting and rehearsal. For couples living outside the Mackenzie Co-operating Parish area this is usually 1 or 2 days prior to your wedding and a suitable time can be arranged.

Please allow at least an hour for your pre-wedding meeting and rehearsal.

For couples living within the local area it is expected that you will meet with the Minister several times leading up to your wedding. (see 5. PREPARING FOR YOUR MARRIAGE)

The Booking of the church will provide access to the Church 30 minutes before your Wedding Service and 1 hour from the commencement of your Service. This will also allow for photos in the Church following your wedding. The Minister would expect the Groom and his party to be at the Church 15 minutes prior to the agreed time of the Service and the Bride and her party to be there within a few minutes of the appointed time.

The Guides will close the gates to restrict tourists and visitors from entering the grounds 30 minutes prior to your Service. The gates will remain closed until you leave.

### b. Procedure for Making a Booking

1. Submit the completed Application Form online:  
<https://www.churchofthegoodshepherd.org.nz/ceremonies/cogs-marriage-application-form>
2. Please note that all areas need to be completed. If you have chosen **Option 1** for marriage preparation (see 5. PREPARING FOR YOUR MARRIAGE) then a letter of support from your Minister, Pastor or Priest should accompany your completed Application.
3. Following consideration of your application you will receive a Provisional Confirmation of Booking and a Payment Advice with the details for payment of the required non-refundable deposit.
4. Your Booking will be confirmed on receipt of your deposit being received by the due date.

## 5. PREPARING FOR YOUR MARRIAGE

A wedding lasts for one day but you are preparing for a marriage of a lifetime. Just as we look forward to celebrating your wedding vows with you, we also encourage you to spend adequate time as a couple preparing yourselves for marriage. While we appreciate that some couples are already in long term partnerships, preparing for marriage is the perfect opportunity to share and discuss your values, expectations and hopes for your future together.

The preface to the marriage service in *A New Zealand Anglican Prayer Book* says, “Marriage is a way of life .... no one should enter into it lightly” Whether you are living in Mackenzie or travelling from overseas to be married here, we’re committed to assisting you in any way we can to help you prepare for your life together.

#### **a. Local Couples**

Couples preparing for marriage who live within or close to the Mackenzie district should anticipate several meetings with the Minister during the months leading up to their wedding.

This will include marriage preparation and the minister may recommend either Prepare-Enrich or The Marriage Course depending on the circumstances and the needs of the couple. *For further information:*

[www.prepare-enrich.org.nz](http://www.prepare-enrich.org.nz)

[www.relationshipcentral.org.nz](http://www.relationshipcentral.org.nz)

#### **b. International Couples or New Zealand couples outside Mackenzie**

If you are coming from overseas or live outside the Mackenzie District you may be unable to participate in a series of pre-marriage meetings with the Minister who will be taking your wedding service. Therefore, we require couples coming from overseas or elsewhere in New Zealand to do one of the following;

##### **Option 1**

Meet with your local church minister, pastor or priest to discuss your marriage plans. This will be an opportunity for you to find support, receive guidance and discuss the values of Christian marriage.

Please provide a letter from your Minister that expresses his or her support for your wedding at The Church of the Good Shepherd. This will provide support for you as you prepare for marriage, it will also assist us by ensuring a positive relationship between our church and your own local church. If you need help finding a church minister in your area, please let us know. Please include the letter of support from your Minister, Pastor or Priest with your Application.

##### **Option 2**

As an alternative, we ask you to either participate in a Christian based marriage preparation course or receive pre-marriage counselling. Information for both these options has been included below:

##### **Marriage Preparation Course:**

We endorse the Alpha Marriage Preparation Course. “The Marriage Preparation Course is an invaluable series of five sessions designed to help engaged couples develop strong foundations for

a lasting marriage.” This course provides couples the opportunity to prepare for marriage on their own and does not involve group sharing or counselling. There is usually a small cost for course materials.

*For further information:* New Zealand – [www.relationshipcentral.org.nz](http://www.relationshipcentral.org.nz)

International - [www.relationshipcentral.org](http://www.relationshipcentral.org)

### **Prepare/Enrich:**

Prepare/Enrich is an online relationship assessment tool designed to help couples grow in their awareness and strengths. The assessment is completed individually. Couples then discuss the results together with a trained facilitator. Prepare/Enrich is available in several languages.

*For further information:*

New Zealand – [www.prepare-enrich.org.nz](http://www.prepare-enrich.org.nz)

International - [www.prepare-enrich.com](http://www.prepare-enrich.com)

### **Other Courses:**

Many mainline Christian Churches (e.g. Catholic, Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian) offer their own marriage preparation courses that you may know of.

Contact a church in your area to find a course that suits your time frame.

Please indicate in the space provided on your Application Form which of the above options that you have chosen.

## **6. PLANNING YOUR WEDDING SERVICE**

There are Wedding Service Options available to couples and these will be emailed once the marriage application has been approved. Couples can then choose the Service that is most suitable to them. There is also a selection of Readings and Blessings which couples can choose to include in their Service. Couples may also have their own suggestion for readings and music which we are happy to include.

### **a. Applying for a Marriage License**

A Marriage Licence is the legal authority by which a Minister is permitted to marry you. A New Zealand Marriage Licence is essential and the Notice of Intended Marriage can be obtained at any Register of Births, Deaths, and Marriages.

The Government website [www.bdm.govt.nz](http://www.bdm.govt.nz) is very helpful. The Registrar requires 3 working days before a Marriage Licence can be issued.

**Important: Please bring a printed copy of your Marriage Licence with you to your Pre-Wedding**

**Meeting with the Minister, and email a PDF copy prior to your meeting if you have one.**

### **Application for Notice of Intended Marriage:**

The following are the details that you will require to complete your 'Notice of Intended Marriage' form:

**Minister:**

**Denomination:**

**Church Address:** The Church of the Good Shepherd, Pioneer Drive, Lake Tekapo

### **b. Witnesses**

Every wedding must have two witnesses. Please provide the full name and address of both witnesses in the area provided on the Application Form. Please notify us of any changes should they occur prior to your wedding.

### **c. Fees**

For couples living outside the Mackenzie District the cost of having a Wedding or a Marriage Blessing Ceremony at The Church of the Good Shepherd is **NZ \$2,500 + gst.**

This fee helps to cover our expenses and contributes to the continued upkeep of the Church. Use of the church, the Minister, Parish administration, use of the music system and additional staff if needed, are included in this cost. You are responsible for arranging musicians or organists if needed.

To confirm a Booking a non-refundable deposit of NZ \$250.00 + gst is required to be paid within one calendar month of the Booking application being made (unless advised otherwise). You will receive an invoice which will include the Church's banking details. The balance of the payment owing must be received by the Church one month prior to your wedding date.

Should the need to cancel your booking occur after the full payment has been made then a partial refund of the fees paid will be made. The application for a refund must be made in writing.

If couples wish to use the services of their own ordained Minister, Pastor or Priest (other than the Minister in Charge of the Mackenzie Co-operating Parish), the celebrant's expenses of \$400 can be paid to that minister by our Treasurer or paid directly by the couple and be discounted from the total shown above.



## **7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Photography**

The taking of photos is welcome in the Church during your Service. It can be very helpful for the Photographer to have a conversation with the minister just before the service if they are unfamiliar with the church or the ceremony.

### **Ceremony Planning Sheet**

A Ceremony Planning Sheet will be sent to you after your application has been approved. Please complete and return this form to the Administrator 10 days prior to your Wedding.

### **Seating**

There is seating in the Church for up to 55 people including the Minister, Organist, Bridal Party and Photographer. When there are more than 55 guests attending some may have to remain outside the Church during the wedding. The Church has a sound system, which can be set up outside the Church for use on such occasions.

### **The Ringing of the Bell**

The Guide will ring the Church Bell at the conclusion of your Service.

### **Flowers & Decoration**

If you wish to have the Church decorated with flowers, this is the responsibility of the couple. You are welcome to discuss this with the Administrator. BluTack, tacks, pins and the like are not permitted. Pew decorations can be attached with ribbon or similar.

### **Confetti, Rice, Streamers**

Confetti, Rice and Streamers are not permitted in the Church or on Church grounds. Genuine rose petals may be used outside the Church only. Please ask the Guide to show you where rose petals can be thrown.

### **Church Furniture**

Church furniture and seating must not be moved at any time as there is a very high risk of damage being caused to the very special furniture and fittings.

### **Alcohol**

Alcohol is not permitted in the Church or on Church grounds (without permission).

### **Smoke Free**

The Church and Grounds are Smoke free at all times.

### **Wheelchair Access**

Due to the natural surroundings of the church there is limited wheelchair access available, please let us know if access is needed.

We wish you well as you prepare for your Marriage and please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries or if we can help in any way.

**Please note that all bookings and communication must be made through the Mackenzie Cooperating Parish Office.**

**Contact details below.**

## **8. CONTACT INFORMATION**

Please send all applications in the first instance to our administrator. The church minister may also provide further pastoral care, marriage preparation as needed and assistance with planning your ceremony.

The Administrator  
Adele Coleman  
Mackenzie Cooperating Parish  
Lake Tekapo, New Zealand  
Email: [admin@mackenziechurch.org.nz](mailto:admin@mackenziechurch.org.nz)

[www.churchofthegoodshepherd.org.nz](http://www.churchofthegoodshepherd.org.nz)  
[www.mackenziechurch.org.nz](http://www.mackenziechurch.org.nz)