



UK National Marriage Week 13th – 19th May 2019

Community meal: Wedding feast

Suggested times/dates for the meal:

1. After your church service on Sunday 19th May
2. Saturday 18th May; breakfast, lunch or early evening meal
3. A mid-week early meal to coincide with a community club or activity that takes place at your church.

Purpose: To celebrate that we the church are the bride of Christ and all are invited to his banquet and to reflect on the value of marriage for the entire community. To have fun together!

Format: Members of the church to provide a celebratory 'wedding feast' for the church community. This can be done as a stand-alone event or to follow on from the Marriage Week prayer stations event (see separate resource).

Who: Church families, local families, those that attend church community groups such as parent and toddler groups, youth and children's clubs, homework clubs, CAP, Foodbank etc.

To do list:

1. Gather together a team of volunteers to organise the event.
2. With plenty of notice prior to the event, ensure you have invited the church congregation (reminding them that this is for everyone to take part) and have invited the local families and community groups to share in the Wedding Feast during Marriage Week.
3. Decide where you will hold the event, ensuring it's large enough for your Wedding Feast.
4. Ask your 'wedding guests' to sign-up to come and to tell you how many of their family will be there so you know roughly how many you're catering for. You'll inevitably get some extras but somehow, there's always enough food on a buffet table!
5. You will need a team of people within your church to organise the catering. We would suggest that you make this a bring-and-share meal or a buffet style meal that is cooked/prepared by a team of church members.
6. Don't forget to provide drinks too. You might wish to provide additional drinks for a 'Wedding Toast'.
7. You may also wish to provide a 'Wedding Cake'. This doesn't have to be an expensive cake, instead some homemade cakes that can be enjoyed as part of the celebration.
8. Ensure you have enough tables and chairs for the event.

Arrival:



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- Have a welcome team ready at the door when people arrive. Have some toys, games etc. available to engage the children.
- Before your 'wedding guests' eat, we suggest a short engaging reflection on Marriage Week and what it means to be the bride of Christ. You could also reflect on the marriage week theme of 'Recipe for a Healthy Marriage' and how some of our relationship ingredients can help as we relate to each other as friends and as a community such as, communication, commitment, kindness, forgiveness and friendship. This should be a short welcome talk as everyone is bound to be thinking about lunch! It also needs to be suitable for all ages and to reflect the community where you live.
- Open the buffet.
- During the meal: Wedding speeches and a wedding toast! Ask people to share a story about their experience of the prayer stations or other events that have taken place during the week. Then follow this with Wedding Cake (as described above). Wedding cakes are a great photo opportunity and we'd love you to share some pictures on Social media (see below).
- At the end of the meal, depending on the time of day, your Wedding Feast activities could include music and dancing for a party atmosphere!
- Social media opportunity. Ask those with social media accounts to join in with the social media campaign by taking selfies of themselves and sharing on a social media platform using #marriageweek. As a church, please also share pictures from the event on social media using #marriageweek

N.B. If you have been running the prayer room with prayer stations at your church (see other Marriage Week resources), you could encourage couples to visit this space before the end of the evening.