

Calling all churches!

Can you make a life-changing difference to the couples in your area by offering them a micro wedding with minimal costs, what we are dubbing the 'Naked Wedding'?

2020 was dominated by the pandemic, lockdown and government restrictions and this has continued into 2021. Therefore, part of the UK Marriage Week campaign is a focus on simple, stripped back weddings to reflect the changes that have already begun and to encourage more couples to choose marriage.

Multiple lockdowns have impacted weddings, some have been cancelled, however, many couples have decided that this isn't going to stop them from getting married and so the intimate, micro weddings of last year have birthed a new era for 2021 onwards!

This is good news because for many couples across the UK, the cost of a wedding is a barrier to marriage, and of course, this is especially true for low-income couples. Removing this barrier is incredibly valuable for couples and families because marriage is three times more successful compared to informal cohabitation.

You and your church community can be part of a 'wedding revolution' and help facilitate couples on the way to the long-term commitment of marriage.

For more information on the background of why marriage matters and the social justice issues at the heart of this initiative, please read the 'Briefing for Churches and Faith Groups'.



*In the Bible, marriage is perfectly designed and freely offered by the Creator as his continuing gift to all. When a man and woman are joined by God, love is sealed, a new family begins and Christ's unending love for his church is pictured. Why would we Christians not freely offer this gift to all who will receive it, and do everything in our power to commend and nurture marriage? Freely you have received, freely give!
Rev Mike Smith, Vicar of Hartford (originator of the £1000 all-inclusive wedding package).*

'Naked Wedding' ideas:

1. Can you help keep down the cost of a wedding for couples in your community?
2. Do you currently offer support to couples to help keep costs down?
3. Can your church community subsidise the cost of the wedding?
4. Can you offer a 'cake and fizz' wedding? A service, followed by an informal reception of cake cutting, speeches and something sparkling to drink, held at your premises – all at a very reduced cost?
5. Can you offer a bigger wedding package like the £1000 all-inclusive example [here](#)?
6. Can you offer a wedding with next to nothing fees like the example [here](#)?
7. Can you offer/facilitate a community wedding, where friends, family, church members/congregation all help out?
8. Can you come up with your own ideas for a 'Naked Wedding' which you could share with us?

Continued...

‘Naked Wedding’ Strategy

If you would like to be part of the ‘wedding revolution’ and think you could do something to help couples, we’ve put together a strategy to help you plan.

First and foremost, you will need to invite others from your community to form a ‘Naked Wedding’ committee. Once you’ve got your team around you, go through the points below:

- A. Go through points 1-8 above and then begin to put together a ‘package’ offer based on what your church community is likely to be able to offer.
- B. Consider those in your church community who you could approach to offer gifts of service, such as hospitality, flower arranging, photographer, videographer, cake making, dress alterations etc. You will also need to identify someone who can oversee your churches unique wedding package.
- C. Once you’ve approached potential volunteers and have secured their offer of help, including your team leader/wedding planner you will need to decide on the final package that you can offer, whether that be a simple offering such as the ‘cake and fizz’ idea or perhaps a small all-inclusive.
- D. The final package will set out exactly what you’re offering and how many packages your church is able to offer. It might just be one or depending on your volunteers, it could be two or three in a year.
- E. We recommend that all wedding packages include access to marriage preparation (you could make it an essential part of your offer), see links to our partners’ resources below*.
- F. Prior to Marriage Week, promote your intimate micro wedding/‘Naked Wedding’ package throughout your community through newsletters, social media, local press etc., but ensure that the offer is officially launched and available for couples to enquire during Marriage Week 2021 – 10th -16th May and beyond.
- G. Don’t forget to tag all your social media posts using @marriageweek #marriageweek #nakedmarriage #nakedwedding.

N.B. Obviously, nothing we suggest in this note overrides government regulation and advice (that may be current at the time of Marriage week and throughout 2021) and the need to take care to keep wedding groups safe.

**Marriage Preparation – course providers:*

<https://www.htb.org/premarriage>

<https://www.marriageprep.co.uk/>

<https://www.marriagecare.org.uk/marriage-preparation-2/>

<https://www.careforthefamily.org.uk/family-life/couple-support/preparing-for-marriage>