



ST KILDA HEBREW CONGREGATION INC REG. NO: A1256

ABN: 26 428 090 013

📍 12 Charnwood Grove, St Kilda VIC 3182

☎ +61 (0)3 9537 1433

☎ +61 (0)3 9525 3759

🌐 www.stkildashule.org.au

✉ office@stkildashule.org

Office hours Mon to Thu 9:00am - 5:00pm, Fri 9:00am - 1:00pm

📘 facebook.com/stkildashule

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Dear *Chatan & Kallah*,

Mazal Tov on your forthcoming marriage!

We are honoured that you have selected our Synagogue for the most joyous occasion of your lives - your wedding. Our Synagogue has a long, happy tradition of beautiful and meaningful weddings and the benefits of our assistance and experience are entirely at your disposal.

As your Rabbi I consider it a special privilege to officiate at weddings. The sacred fusion of two people into a family unit and the founding of a new Jewish home among the people of Israel is an event hardly less significant in the context of the community than the consecration of a Synagogue. It is therefore an occasion of intense joy, and its dignity and beauty should not fail to impress their profound message on you both and on all your guests.

The attached will provide you the information you need. Please note that I do not get involved in any of the administrative arrangements. You might check my availability with me but otherwise the wedding is not considered booked unless the Shule office has your paperwork. A lot of the attached information is administrative. I will go through the halachic issues with you when we meet face-to-face.

Thank you for enabling us to share these precious moments in your life.

Yours sincerely,

Rabbi Yaakov Glasman
Senior Rabbi
St Kilda Hebrew Congregation Inc



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☞ **THE PROCESS LEADING UP TO THE DAY** (👉 indicates an Action item) ☜

THE MARRIAGE DATE: Please check your preferred wedding date with the Rabbi before announcing it.

👉 There are several periods in the Jewish calendar when marriages are not conducted.

INTERVIEW AT THE SHULE: Applicants for marriage initially meet with the Rabbi.

👉 For the interview you should bring 1) the Ketuba (Jewish marriage certificate) of parents of both bride and groom (or full details as to place, Synagogue, date and officiating rabbi); 2) your full birth certificates. Details of your Hebrew Names and those of parents are also required; 3) The “Notice of Intended Marriage”, in conformity with the Marriage Act 1961, must be signed and witnessed by the Rabbi or some other authorised person no more than six months prior to the wedding and no less than one month prior to the wedding.

Where documents are unavailable further investigation by the Rabbi may be necessary.

FEES: Our fees include the provision of our Rabbi, the lodgement of paperwork, the setup of our own chuppah (when the wedding is performed on our premises), the supply of our Ketubah (Jewish marriage contract), wine (when the wedding is performed on our premises), a glass for breaking, office time and the provision of our groundsman an hour before the scheduled start time.

- **Additional costs** are rare but will occur when our Minister needs to travel to a wedding out of metropolitan Melbourne or when our groundsman has to arrive onsite earlier than an hour beforehand (for example, to meet a florist or a chuppah decorator). The interposition of a “wedding consultant/organizer” may result in additional costs if liaison with them incurs additional work for our staff. Written confirmation must be given to the congregation by the bride and groom for the consultant/organizer to be recognized as a person with whom the congregation will deal in regard to their wedding.
- **Wedding fee:** \$750 (non-members, but we will gift you membership) or just \$250 (members)
- **Deposit:** A \$100 deposit is payable with the lodgement and confirmation of your wedding through us, but that is deducted from the wedding fee. The remainder is due 2 weeks prior to your wedding.
- **Chazzan:** (by arrangement with our chazzan Brett Kaye 0413 259 497)
- **Choir:** (by arrangement with our choirmaster Adrian Bartak 0449 752 456)
- **Keyboardist:** (by arrangement with our choirmaster Adrian Bartak 0449 752 456)

INVITATIONS: To ensure that our understanding of the arrangements is the same as yours, please

👉 show us the final draft of your wedding invitation. You may email it to us at office@stkildashule.org

PRE-MARRIAGE WORKSHOPS: The Shule supports the Yad B'Yad program which conducts Pre-marriage Workshops. These workshops are highly recommended for your benefit. The Rabbi will discuss this with you.

👉 **BOOK THE AUFRUFF (Pre-wedding call up) (at least 6 weeks before the wedding):** See more information below.

👉 **RETURN YOUR AUFRUFF CALL-UP FORM (at least 3 weeks before the wedding):** See more information below. It is common for the couple to provide a list of up to 5-6 names of Jewish males who they would like to honour at the Aufruff (including the groom). The honours can include being called to the Torah (we have the *berachot* – blessings – in transliterated English, so one does not need to know how to read any Hebrew); *Petichah* (opening the Ark); *Hagba'ah* (lifting the Torah); *Gelilah* (wrapping the Torah); and holding the Torah during prayers or on the return to the Ark. As there are always other people we need to honour, you may have to limit who you can honour.

If you have any concerns about how the Aufruff or honours work, or who you can/should honour, please feel free to discuss this with the Rabbi.

The form also asks you if you wish the Shule to provide lollies (1 or 2 bags) for throwing by the ladies on the day. You may not bring lollies or whisky for the kiddush on the Shabbat itself.



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AUFRUFF (up to 10 days before the wedding): "Aufruff" means being called-up to the Torah. Traditionally, the groom is called up to the Torah on a Shabbat closely preceding the wedding. I note that this could be the day before a Sunday wedding but as the bride and groom may not see each other for up to a week before the wedding, according to tradition, and many brides like to be present, the Aufruff might be the Shabbat before that. This is ALWAYS when we read the Torah but that could be a Shabbat morning, a Shabbat afternoon, a Monday morning, a Thursday morning or some other occasions.

👉 Please discuss with Rita, in the office on **03 9537 1433 Ext 901** or email office@stkildashule.org when you would like to arrange your Aufruff.

There is NO additional charge to have an Aufruff but there *could* be a charge for using the hall for a kiddush if you choose not to invite the congregation.

MIKVAH: An important mitzvah that takes place before the wedding day is a bride's immersion in the Mikvah. Classes are taught by a female teacher. The rabbi will provide you her number.

👉 It is crucial that the bride make an appointment with one of our preferred teachers.

Please consult the rabbi for a list of approved teachers as soon as possible for guidance in preparation for the use of the Mikvah and the observance of the precept of Family Purity. It is essential that, as a bride, you telephone the Mikvah (after dark) about a week in advance to make an appointment or as advised by your *kallah* teacher.

✂ THE PROCESS ON THE DAY OF THE WEDDING ✂

NOT SEEING EACH OTHER: Distance makes the heart grow fonder. On this day, and for most couple for a week prior to the wedding, the couple does not see each other until the *Bedeken* (see below). Therefore, joint photos take place only after the *Badeken*. In fact, normally the couple arrive to the Shule at slightly different times (just a few minutes apart). See Arrival Times below.

FASTING: Although a wedding evokes tremendous joy, from a religious viewpoint it begins on a solemn note representing the bride and groom's commitment to mirror the relationship between G-d and humanity. In fact, the wedding day shares many qualities with the most sacred day of the year, Yom Kippur - the purity, atonement for the past, looking towards a new life into the future and so on. Both occasions begin a new epoch in a person's life and, traditionally, the bride and groom fast from sunrise on their wedding day until the *Chuppah* ceremony is over unless fasting is difficult for health reasons.

DRESS CODE: The clothing of the bride, the groom and retinue must accord with the sanctity of the Synagogue and the marriage ceremony and should not be overly revealing.

ARRIVAL TIMES: The Groom should be at the Synagogue or relevant venue no later than 20 minutes before the scheduled time of the ceremony. The Bride should arrive no later than the scheduled time of the ceremony. Late arrival should be avoided if at all possible as the Rabbi may often have other scheduled commitments following the *Chuppah* ceremony. Guests should be seated in the Synagogue five minutes before the scheduled ceremony time.

THE CEREMONY:

- 1. KINYAN:** Before the ceremony, the Groom undertakes the obligations detailed in the *Ketubah* in the presence of two religious witnesses (usually the Rabbi and another official of the congregation) who sign the document. A standard Prenuptial Contract (see sample at the end) regarding the religious regime of the marriage will be signed at this stage unless the couple indicates to the contrary.
- 2. BEDEKEN - "VEILING":** The groom is taken to the bride where he places the veil over her face. This is a special moment where, in the intimate company of close family, the bride and groom are blessed before going to the *Chuppah*. The triple blessing incorporates the words of the mother and brother of Rebecca upon her departure to marry Isaac, the traditional blessing of Jewish sons and daughters by their parents and the Priestly Blessing. The veiling relates back historically to the marriage of our ancestors Isaac and Rebecca and also Rachel and Jacob when the bride's father substituted his elder daughter Leah for the Bride.
- 3. PROCESSION:** Following the *Bedeken* the Groom is brought under the *Chuppah* by his father and/or mother accompanied by his best man and Groomsman and stands to the left side of the *Chuppah*. The bridal retinue



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then enters the Synagogue in procession. The Bride is then escorted ceremoniously to the *Chuppah*. It is at this point that she customarily circles the groom seven times in the traditional manner. She then stands next to the groom on the right side of the *Chuppah*.

4. **CHUPPAH:** There are in fact two separate procedures which take place under the *Chuppah*.
5. **KIDDUSHIN – CONSECRATION:** The *Kiddushin* (betrothal/consecration), usually with a wedding ring and in the presence of two witnesses (usually the Rabbi and an official of Congregation), is conducted. The wedding ring should be plain and round and be the exclusive property of the groom. Blessings are made followed by the drinking of wine. We typically provide white wine so that couples needn't worry about stains on their clothing should it accidentally spill. The *Ketubah* (Marriage Contract) is read publicly and the Rabbi usually addresses the couple at this point. This also serves to separate the *Kiddushin* from the next part of the ceremony, namely the *Sheva Brachot* and *Yichud*.
6. **SHEVA BRACHOT AND YICHUD (SEVEN NUPTIAL BLESSINGS AND PRIVACY)**
The *Chuppah* itself represents the bride and groom beginning to live together as husband and wife. The *Sheva Brachot* (seven blessings) are recited as the ceremonial aspect of the *Chuppah*. Wine is drunk for the second time. A separate glass is provided by the Shule for the concluding part under the *Chuppah* at when the groom steps on it, breaking the glass to symbolize the destruction of the Temple, remembered even during our happiest occasions. The *Chuppah* culminates in the Bride and groom leaving the *Chuppah* for *Yichud* - a few moments spent alone together. It is customary for the couple to partake in the food prepared for them to break their fast (see above).
7. **THE RECEPTION:** The reception is the first of seven nuptial banquets during which the *Sheva Brachot* are recited. This meal, apart from being a most joyous and festive celebration, also incorporates a religious dimension and is characterized as a *Seudat Mitzvah* - a meal accompanying and celebrating a Mitzvah. The *birkat hamazon* - grace after meals - is followed by the *sheva brachot* - seven nuptial blessings. In keeping with its character as a *Seudat Mitzvah*, it follows that the reception should ideally be Kosher. A Kosher reception also creates an inclusive environment where all are made to feel equal.