

## Wedding during a Pandemic

*Philippians 4:6-7: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*

As I write this, I only have a fortnight to wait until I get married. And what a long wait it's been! Last year, as I watched many of my close friends get married, I looked forward to the day when it would be my turn, my time to have a big celebration with all my nearest and dearest.

As lockdown struck, we both suddenly realised that our wedding, the wedding we had been planning for and saving for throughout the last two years might not be the exact day that we had hoped for.

I'll confess to you all, I had become carried away with the idea of THE BIG WEDDING. Agonising over tiny details and worrying about the aesthetics of it all. At one point I even seriously enquired about fireworks (I mean, who do I think I am, Harry and Megan?)

But what lockdown has actually done is forced my fiancé and me to spend unimaginable amounts of time together. My whole pace of life has slowed down. We've had days and weeks of quality time, the likes of which we'll probably never have again. We plan our meals together, head off on our weekly shop as if it's as exciting as a night out, have chats on our lunch break, dance around the house and go for walks, mostly to feed the horses that we've discovered in a field round the corner. It's been brilliant.

I moved through a process of being anxious about everything to simply trusting in God and his plans for our lives. I love this verse from Philippians. It's one of my favourites and I find it so comforting.

I think that Paul wants us to have God's joy in every situation, not just so that we will be happy people, but so that we can be effective witnesses of Jesus. Our worries turn to anxiety when we lack faith in God's role as our Sovereign Lord and provider, and when we put our self at the centre, instead of God's kingdom and righteousness.

So during this period, I've been trying to do just that. I've made the most of it. I've loved spending some of this extra time with God, through prayer, Bible study or just taking advantage of all the wonderful webinars and range of church services suddenly on offer.

And now, I'm not even entirely sure I care all that much about a wedding. In the grand scheme of things, compared to the loss, stress and grief that many people are dealing with, does it really matter?

No, what matters is the fact that in 14 days, I'll finally get to marry my best friend. It'll be a simple but happy day with my closest family. I'm so grateful to God for being with me throughout this time and while it has sometimes been a challenge, I've managed to hold on

to the peace that God gives me. The tricky thing is to remember that it's always there for all of us. We just need to have faith.