



sights and sounds of your wedding
thoughts to help from our music ministry

Great News

Congratulations on setting the big day. In the coming days, you will have countless decisions to make. Where to register, who your officiant will be, how many people to invite to the ceremony, and countless others. Among these decisions, you will get to engage in the process of choosing the music for your wedding. There are countless options, but these thoughts are designed to help you narrow the choices and select meaningful songs that glorify God and enhance this sacred day.

It's Important

Weddings are sacred events. More than a civil formality or official agreement, the wedding ceremony is an act of worship, designed to glorify God and center the union of a woman and a man under God's leadership. Because of this, the music used at a wedding ceremony should above all point others toward God. This day is about you and your soon-to-be spouse, but it is mostly about God and what God had done in your lives.

It's About God

Because a church wedding is a worship service, music that is sacred and pointed toward God is the best choice for your ceremony. Other secular music is best included in the reception or rehearsal dinner. This in no way should limit your musical choices! All instruments can glorify God, and no instrument is more Christian than the next. There are many meaningful wedding songs that would be appropriate for your sacred ceremony. A good guideline to use for selecting any music to be used before, during or after the service is

to read through the lyrics of the song and ask: "Would these words be appropriate for the minister to preach in a sacred service?"

Keep it Clean

While God created sexual intimacy in a marriage as an exciting and inviting aspect to this covenant, songs that use explicit sexual imagery are not appropriate for use in a wedding service of worship. In addition, songs that are inappropriate for theological or other reasons will not be suitable for a wedding.

Choose Early

Creativity and good decision making requires room to make choices without pressure. Don't wait until the last minute to choose the music for your wedding. Start as soon as possible once the wedding date is set. Consider making a list of various aspects of the ceremony. Those might include:

- How do you want your ceremony to feel? Formal? Liturgical? Modern? Contemporary? Traditional? This relates more to the overall feel of the ceremony, but does impact the music considerably.
- Write down specific components that characterize this feel. For example, does formal mean an organ and candles? Does modern mean low lighting and an electric guitar?
- What songs of faith have been important to you as an individual? As a couple?
- What sounds, instruments, and musicians do you want as a part of this special day?
- In what parts of the ceremony would you like to include music? Will there be a time of worship through singing for the congregation? Will there be a special vocal or instrumental solo?

Think It Through

At the end of this document is a place to write down information related to your wedding that will be helpful for musicians, ministers, and others alike. Be sure to fill this form out thoroughly.

Get Help

Many of the preliminary decisions can be made on your own, but you would be wise to get some input from the minister leading your ceremony. Often a minister has specific guidelines for music for a wedding ceremony, but most ministers are very accommodating to the wishes of the bride and groom. It would also be helpful to you to have the input of a musician and/or worship leader. With experience in preparing worship services, he or she will be an invaluable resource.

Live or iPod

Wedding music is just a click away online, and there are many good resources available. Some people choose to use digital recordings from an iPod or CD for their ceremony, and in certain circumstances, this can work well. Just remember that for this special day, real human beings singing and playing live will add a sacred, specific, and intimate feel to your special day. If you have the option, put the iPod away, and call a real person.

Use Trusted and Talented People

This is a special, once-in-a-lifetime kind of day, and worrying about musicians that day should be the last thing on your list. Choose people whom you trust, and who are talented in what they do. If you have people close to you who are musicians, consider asking them.

Of course, there are many talented church musicians and worship leaders who would be glad to be considered to assist with your ceremony. It will be your responsibility to schedule, book, and communicate with the musicians for your ceremony.

Be Particular

You might not think it matters, but it will. When people across cultures do something important, singing *always* marks the occasion. When you're watching a blockbuster hit film, it is the soundtrack that gives it the power to grip at the heart and speak to the mind. As people of faith, we offer that music to God, to be used in a way that points people to the goodness of the creator.

Say Thanks

It takes a lot of time and talent for a musician to purchase music, drive to the rehearsal and ceremony, and rehearse the music to a level of excellence. Without exception, budget to compensate all the musicians who join you for your wedding. Like the pastor or photographer, the musicians' time, travel, mileage and lodging should be considered. If this is a hardship, consider having a frank conversation with the musician ahead of time.

What's More

Music is just one part of your ceremony. Readings of scripture, prayers, a short message, and sacred vows are typical elements of most weddings. Communicate early and often with your officiant to personalize your wedding.

Blessings

Congratulations again on your decision to join together in a covenant of love and respect under God. Blessings.

The beginning of love is to let those we love be perfectly themselves, and not to twist them to fit our own image. Otherwise we love only the reflection of ourselves we find in them.
-Thomas Merton

The music minister can be contacted at
office@nbcvictoria.org

Ceremony Information

Bride: _____ main contact y / n

Groom: _____ main contact y / n

Main Contact Mailing Address: _____

Main Contact Cell Phone: _____

Main Contact Home Phone: _____

Main Contact Email: _____

Wedding Date: _____

Actual Wedding Time: _____

Prelude Start Time: _____

Wedding Location: _____

Rehearsal Date: _____

Rehearsal Time: _____

Rehearsal Location: _____

Candle Lighting: y/ n

Seating of Grandparents

How many seated for the bride? _____

How many seated for the groom? _____

Seating of Parents

How many seated for the bride?

How many seated for the groom?

Processional (Entrance Music)

Number in the wedding party that will process down the aisle:

Bridesmaids _____ Groomsmen _____

What is the cue for bride's processional music? (choose one)

- Flower Girl arrives in front
- Maid of Honor arrives in front
- Other: _____

Service Music (check all that apply)

- There will be congregational hymns requiring accompaniment.
- There will be a vocalist that will need accompaniment.
- There will be an instrumentalist that will need accompaniment.

Recessional (Leaving Music)

Number in the wedding party that will recess down the aisle:

Bridesmaids _____ Groomsmen _____

What is the cue for recessional to end? (choose one)

- All wedding party has exited.
- All wedding party and parents have exited
- All wedding party, parents, and grandparents have exited.
The recessional does not stop; it acts as a postlude while guests exit.

Postlude (After Service Concludes)

What is the cue for the postlude to begin? (choose one)

- Postlude continues from recessional with no break between the two.
- Begin after minister announces reception.

Musical Preferences

Instruments Suggested

- Piano
- Keyboard Organ
- Guitar
- Drums
- Other: _____

Prelude (Before Service):

Candle Lighting:

Seating of Grandparents:

Seating of Parents:

Wedding Party Processional (Entrance Music):

Bride Processional (Entrance Music):

Music During the Service:

Recessional (Leaving Music):

Postlude (After Service Concludes):

Other:

Names of All Musicians and Contact Information:
