

Music for Christian Weddings

Reviewed February 2019

In choosing music for their wedding, couples often want to include a favourite song. Whether or not it can be included will depend on the concept of love that the song promotes. Sometimes, the couple are not fully appreciative of the fact that the wedding ceremony is essentially a sacred celebration and not just their own private matter. Once they are aware that music during the celebration should reflect the sacred nature of the ceremony, the task of choosing music becomes a little easier. There are other opportunities – at the wedding reception, for example – when popular ‘love songs’ are more appropriate.

The main question to ask is: “What music will best enable those present to participate in the liturgy on the day?” Generally, music that is well known – or at least easy to join in – is preferable. If the congregation is unlikely to be familiar with music sung at Sunday Masses, then this will affect the choices made.

Ideally, there will be someone willing and able to lead the singing, thereby encouraging and supporting the congregation.

Entrance Procession

If a **gathering hymn** is used, the following are examples of what would be appropriate:

Come on this wedding day – Shirley Erena Murray [Gather Australia No. 222]

Bridegroom and bride – John Bell [Gather Australia No. 220]

May God’s light of joyous blessing – Anon (See Appendix)

God who blesses new beginnings – Harry Huxbold [See Appendix]

If **music alone is used**, the following are examples of what would be appropriate:

Handel: Arrival of the Queen of Sheba (from Solomon)

Handel: Hornpipe (from Water Music)

Clark: Trumpet Voluntary

Purcell: Trumpet Tune in C

Pachelbel: Canon in D



Responsorial Psalms

Psalm 33 (32): The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord [See Appendix]

Psalm 34 (33): I will bless the Lord at all times OR *Taste and see the goodness of the Lord.*

Christopher Willcock [Gather Australia No. 33]

Stephen Dean [Gather Australia No. 34]

Marty Haugen [Gather Australia No. 27]

Jenny O'Brien [Psalms for Sundays of Year B: 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time]

Psalm 103 (102): The Lord is kind and merciful

Christopher Willcock [Gather Australia No. 61]

[note that v.3 is not the same as in the Marriage text, and could be omitted]

Jenny O'Brien – unpublished [see separate booklet]

Psalm 128 (127): Happy are those who fear the Lord

Paul Inwood [Gather Australia No. 75]

[Change the first words of the antiphon from “O blessed are those” to “How happy those...”]

Jenny O'Brien [Psalms for the Sundays of Year A: Feast of the Holy Family]

Psalm 145: The Lord is compassionate to all his creatures

Christopher Willcock [Gather Australia No. 82]

Jenny O'Brien [Psalms for the Sundays of Year C: 31st Sunday in Ordinary Time – use verses 2,3, & 4]

Psalm 148: Let all praise the name of the Lord

Howard Hughes [Gather Australia No.62. Verses 1, 2, 5, 6 & 7]

Jenny O'Brien - unpublished [See Appendix]

Alleluia Verse

Any well-known setting of the Alleluia verse is suitable here.

Many people are familiar with the traditional plainchant melody or with the Celtic Alleluia setting (Gather Australia No.141; AOV Vol 1, No.13)

After Exchange of Rings

Wherever you go – Gregory Norbert [Gather Australia No. 223; As One Voice Vol.1, No.59]

Like a seal on your heart – Carey Landry [Abba Father Collection]

Preparation of the Gifts

It is probably better to simply have instrumental music here. Examples of suitable music include:

Bach: Sheep may safely graze [from Cantata No. 208]

Bach: Jesu, joy of man's desiring

Pachelbel: Canon in D

Communion

Bread of Life, Hope of the World – Bernadette Farrell [Gather Australia No. 199]

We have been told – David Haas [Gather Australia No. 501]

Panis Angelicus – César Franck

Dwelling Place – John Foley [Dwelling Place collection]

The Servant Song – Richard Gillard [Gather Australia No. 487]

Signing of Register

Love changes everything – Andrew Lloyd Weber [from Aspects of Love]

Ave Maria - Gounod or Schubert

A Nuptial Blessing - Michael Joncas [from Come to me collection]

Like a seal on your heart – Carey Landry [from Abba Father collection]

Recessional Music

Handel: Hornpipe [from Water Music]

Handel: Solemn March [from Joshua]

Handel: March [from Scipio]

Clark: Trumpet Voluntary

Mendelssohn: Wedding March

Appendix

May God's light of joyous blessing

[Anon. -(Sung to tune "Hymn of Joy")]

1. May God's light of joyous blessing
shine upon these two, we pray;
Brighten now this glad occasion
as we gather here today.
Let them hear the voice of music,
know the scent of fragrant flow'r,
feel the touch of solemn beauty
in the quiet of this hour.
2. When they hold their hands with promise
of kind trust and loyal care,
strengthen, guide, sustain, unite them
in the life they now will share.
May God's gift of joyous blessing
rest upon these two we pray.
Always follow them and keep them,
favour them along life's way.

God who blesses new beginnings

[Text: Harry Huxbold Music: Tune HYFRYDOL]
(Sung to tune "Love divine, all loves excelling")

1. God who blesses new beginnings,
send your Spirit from above
on this Christian man and woman,
who here make their vows of love!
Bind their hearts in true devotion
endless as the seashore's sands,
Boundless as the deepest ocean,
Blest and sealed by your own hands.
2. Give them joy to lighten sorrow!
Give them hope to brighten life!
Go with them to face the morrow,
Stay with them in every strife.
As your word has promised ever,
fill them with your strength and grace,
so that each may serve the other
till they see you face to face.
3. May the grace of Christ, our Saviour,
and our Maker's boundless love,
with the Holy Spirit's favour,
rest upon them from above.
May they live in lasting union
with each other and the Lord;
finding joy in hearts' communion:
joy to share in lives outpoured.