

Putting together your wedding ceremony

Here is an outline of what happens in the wedding ceremony and the decisions you need to make about it.

Procession

- You will need to choose the music for the procession and discuss with the organist.
- Popular pieces include:
 - Bridal Chorus from Lohengrin by Richard Wagner;
 - Trumpet Voluntary by Jeremiah Clarke;
 - Trumpet Tune by Henry Purcell;
 - Canon in D by Pachelbel.

Any of these pieces can be looked up on Youtube, but even better, make an appointment to meet our organist after the 9.30 am service on a Sunday, and he can show you how they will sound on our organ. (These appointments are usually possible on the third or fourth Sunday of the month.)

Hymns

- You need to decide whether you would like the congregation to sing hymns at your wedding. This can work well if at least some of the congregation are accustomed to singing in church. Normally we would suggest two as a good number of hymns to have.
- Often a hymn is sung directly after the bridal procession, and another towards the end of the service.
- We will try to accommodate anything you would like as long as it is suitable for the setting. Some popular selections are:
 - Amazing Grace
 - Praise my soul the King of Heaven
 - Love Divine, all loves excelling
 - May the mind of Christ my Saviour

The Preface (read by the Minister)

The Consent

- Would the bride's father (or both parents) like to be asked "Who gives this woman?"

The Wedding

- This is the part where you say your vows. These are taken from the Second Order for Marriage in the Australian Prayer Book (1978), and are based on the Anglican marriage service that has been in use for over 500 years.

[The Kiss]

- Some couples like to have this listed as a separate item on the order of service. (Don't worry, it will happen either way!)

Bible Readings

- Which readings have you chosen? Choose two readings, with at least one from the New Testament. Here are some suggestions (asterisked are the all time favourites):

*Genesis 2:18-25

Psalm 128

Song of Songs 2:1-7

Song of Songs 2:8-14

Song of Songs 8:6-7

John 2:1-11

Romans 12:9-18

*1 Corinthians 13:1-8 [up to "love never ends"]

Ephesians 3:14-21

*Ephesians 5:22-33

Philippians 2:1-11

Colossians 3:12-19

1 John 4:7-16

1 Peter 2:21-25

1 Peter 3:1-9

*Revelation 21:1-5

- Who will be reading them? (We suggest that two friends or family members might like to read, one for each reading.)
- The reader should *introduce* the reading by saying something like: "The first Bible reading is from the Book of Genesis, chapter 2, beginning at verse 18."
- The Bible translation used at St Jude's is the New International Version (NIV, 2011). (Please consult us before using a different translation.) If you don't have an NIV handy, you can look up your passage in the NIV at a Bible website such as www.biblegateway.com.

Sermon (Minister)

Prayers (Minister and/or friend/family member)

- Consider whether you would like to ask a friend or family member to pray for you as part of the wedding service. This should be a person who is known as a solid churchgoing Christian. Some suggestions for things to pray about are on the next page.
- If you don't have a family member or friend who feels comfortable to do this, that's fine: the minister will lead in prayer.

Signing of the Register

- You might like to choose a piece of music for the organist to play during the signing of the register. Some couples arrange a special musical item such as a vocal performance. Alternatively, the organist can play a selection of suitable music during this time.

Recessional

- You need to choose some music for the organist to play as you leave the church.
- Popular choices include:
 - Wedding March (Midsummer Night's Dream) by Felix Mendelssohn;
 - Trumpet Voluntary by Jeremiah Clarke;
 - Trumpet Tune by Purcell;
 - Hornpipe (from the Water Music) by Handel;
 - Toccata by Charles Widor.

Printed Order of Service

We encourage you to make a printed order of service to be handed out to wedding guests. This shows what happens in the service so that guests can see what happens next. If possible, it is a good idea to print the Bible passages and hymn words on the order of service.

Preparing and printing this document is your responsibility, however, the minister can show you some examples from previous weddings.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS FOR A WEDDING

Thank you for agreeing to lead in prayer at this wedding. Below are some points you might like to include in your prayer. However, make sure you put the prayer *in your own words* so it sounds natural and heartfelt.

- ❖ Thank God for the gift of marriage.
- ❖ Thank him that marriage is a sign of his great love for mankind, because it points us to the union between Jesus Christ and his precious church, for which he gave his life.
- ❖ Thank him for bringing N and N together to be married.
- ❖ Ask God to help N and N live as husband and wife in a way which is pleasing to him.
- ❖ Ask God to help the husband love his wife as his own body, and put her wellbeing above his own.
- ❖ Ask God to help the wife respond graciously and kindly to the husband's love.
- ❖ Ask God to help N and N to be patient with each other, and forgive each other, and not "keep a record of wrongs" (1 Corinthians 13:5, NIV).
- ❖ Pray that their home will be a safe and peaceful place.
- ❖ Pray for the blessing of children, and the wisdom and grace to bring them up in a way which honours God.
- ❖ Pray that the couple will bring joy and blessing to each other, and to family, friends and the community.
- ❖ Pray for everyone gathered at the wedding ceremony, and other family and friends, that God will use them to encourage the couple to keep the very important promises they have made to each other.
- ❖ Anything else you feel is important for this couple or their extended family.

Before you prepare your prayer, you might also like to read Genesis 2:18-25, Ephesians 5:22-33, and 1 Corinthians 13:1-13 to get you thinking.

All of this should give you plenty of ideas! I recommend you write/type up your prayer, word for word. Aim for about 300 words (definitely no more than 400!). As long as you don't speak too quickly, this should take you about 3 to 4 minutes, which is a good length.

Andrew Schmidt
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