

To the Perspective Bride and Groom,

Congratulations! Planning your wedding is exciting. As the Director of Music/Organist at St. James, I'd like to share some thoughts on planning the music for your ceremony.

(Most of this information assumes that you will want organ music for your wedding. If you are planning to have another instrument or ensemble, like a string quartet, you will need to make those arrangements and discuss the music with them.)

As the guests are arriving, I will play about 20 minutes of prelude music. I generally play an assortment of classical and sacred music. If you have something that you would like played during the prelude, please let me know. If I have the music, I would be happy to play it. If I don't have it, you will need to provide the music. Otherwise you don't need to worry about choosing music for the prelude.

I usually play all wedding music on the organ, but if you would prefer piano, just ask. The processional and recessional would probably be more appropriate on the organ, because it has a more majestic sound, but that's your choice, and any prelude music could be done on either instrument.

Please note that a church wedding ceremony is a service of worship. Any music used during the ceremony needs to reflect the sacredness of the occasion. If you have a secular pop song you just love and want as part of your wedding, please save it for your reception, where it will be more appropriate.

Right before the bridal party enters, the parents of the groom and the mother of the bride are seated. If you would like something special played at that point, let me know. Otherwise, I will just continue with prelude music.

You will need to choose music for the **Processional**, as the bridal party enters, and the **Recessional**, as the party leaves. The Processional music is a slower regal style march, and the Recessional is usually quicker and more upbeat.

You are welcome to borrow a CD with excerpts from all of the Processionals and Recessionals on the attached list. (The CD was recorded on a small keyboard, but will give you a good idea of what it will sound like on the real organ.) Take some time to listen to different pieces and picture them at your wedding. Some are very commonly done, but don't limit yourself to those. Find something that you really

like. Keep the CD as long as you need it, but please return it before your wedding so that others may use it, too. A list of the pieces on the CD is attached to this letter

For the **Processional**, you can either choose one piece or two different pieces, one for the bridal party and one for the bride. If you choose the traditional Wagner *Wedding March*, I would definitely suggest saving that for the bride and having something different for the bridal party. Either way, I will play a fanfare just before the bride enters.

You only need one piece for the **Recessional**. After the bridal party exits, I will then continue to play a Postlude as the guests leave. If you'd like to choose another of the pieces to be used for the Postlude, that's fine. If not, I will choose something appropriate.

You are welcome to have a soloist/duet or other music as part of your ceremony, keeping in mind that all music should be appropriate for a sacred service. Special music can be used as part of the ceremony itself and/or as part of the prelude music.

If your soloist needs accompaniment, please have them contact me so that we can make plans to rehearse. I will be at your wedding rehearsal and can probably practice with them at that time, but I need to know ahead of time what they are doing. We do have microphones that they can use.

As soon as you know what you want, please fill out the **Wedding Music Form**, which you can get in the church office or from the pastor. Please return it to the church at least 2 weeks ahead of your wedding date. If I can be of any help, or if you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

Best wishes as you plan your wedding. May God bless you in this new and exciting time in your lives.

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