



### **SAMPLE WEDDING CEREMONY**

Many people are taking on planning their wedding ceremony outside the church and maybe without a professional wedding planner. Although most people have been to a wedding or two, most people did not pay attention to the order and so forth. The following is a list of usual ceremony activities and some traditional music selections. I have helped many people with their ceremony and have seen many things go right and wrong. Obviously, some of the statements are just my opinion. Keep in mind, this is your wedding—you can do whatever you want. I've seen a bride dance down the aisle to "Boogie Shoes." I've seen a couple's dog bring the ring down the aisle with a pillow tied on his back. Furthermore, I'm here to help you figure out what you want to do and help make it happen.

### **LOGISTICS**

I need electricity somewhere near the ceremony area. This equipment is lightweight and easy to move quickly. I also have a small black tent if rain is a threat. I will sit near the front, off to the side. There will be a couple of small speakers down at ground level, not visible in photos. I use a small TV table for my equipment and it is not obtrusive. I will have a walkie-talkie with an earbud in my ear and another walkie-talkie for your coordinator, the person lining folks up and sending them in. I will place a lapel mic on the preacher. The mic is not for loudness; it's to allow the officiant to speak normally and even softly and still be heard by the crowd without difficulty. Often the lapel mic picks up the groom and bride as well. Although for self-spoken vows, I recommend a handheld mic held by the groom to ensure everyone can hear.

### **PRE-WEDDING MUSIC**

Usually about 30 minutes before your ceremony starts, I will begin playing songs very softly. These songs set the stage and can be chosen by you. Traditionally classical music is played; however, if this is not your style, slow sweet country music is appropriate. I've played anything from Disney instrumentals to John Mayer and Michael Bublé type music. Whatever the case, this music should reflect your personality and overall "feel" of the wedding.

### **List pre-wedding songs here if desired:**

### **CEREMONY ABOUT TO START**

By this time I'm in place, off to the side where I can see everything that is going on. Like I said before, I wear a headset with a walkie-talkie, so your coordinator can communicate with me before, during, and after the ceremony. If you wish, I can make a quick announcement a few minutes before we start. I call this the "one-minute warning." I will welcome everyone, also I'll remind everyone to silence their cell phones and pagers and let everyone know we are starting in a couple of minutes. Furthermore, I can also ask kindly that no one use their phone for photos during the ceremony—this is all completely up to you.

### **CEREMONY STARTS**

Think about how you want to start. This seems to vary more than any other part of the ceremony. You have several choices. You can start with the officiant in place with the groom and his groomsmen. Another option is having the groomsmen bring in the bridesmaids at a later time. Some people have the officiant and the groom come in from the side as the grandparents and parents are escorted in. You may also have the groom escort in the mothers then join the officiant up front. Either way, there is a song that starts at a higher volume

to signal we are starting. The grandparents and parents are escorted in; frequently the mothers will pass by and light their side of the unity candle as they enter. We will need to pick a song for this: SONG #1

**SONG #1** \_\_\_\_\_

**BRIDESMAIDS ENTER**

After the grandparents and parents are in and seated, the song usually changes to “SONG #2” to signal the bridesmaids are coming in. As stated before, they may come in one at a time or be escorted by the groomsmen. The traditional song is Pachelbel’s “Canon in D.” However, you can choose whichever song you like. For any and all the songs, you do not have to worry about length. I will play the song as long as needed and loop it as necessary to keep everything running smoothly. The last ones in this group are the ring bearer and flower girl if you choose. This is the time occasionally people pull a runner down the aisle for the bride’s entrance.

**SONG #2** \_\_\_\_\_

**BRIDE’S ENTRANCE**

Typically, I stop all music to create a dramatic pause. Next, I play the song chosen for the bridal march: “SONG #3.” I have all the traditional marches, along with some contemporary versions of the wedding march. You can choose whatever song you like, though. I’ve seen quite a few brides use instrumental acoustic versions of their favorite songs—anything from the Beatles to Metallica, your choice. The song that is chosen is the cue to the bride’s mother to stand and prompt the rest of the congregation to stand. When the bride is in place, her dress is straight, and there are no dogs barking, airplanes flying overhead, or babies screaming, I will fade the music.

**SONG #3** \_\_\_\_\_

**OFFICIANT OR PREACHER TAKES OVER**

Your officiant takes over at this point. I do place a lapel mic on the officiant. It is almost invisible to your congregation. This makes all the difference in the world. Your congregation will be able to hear all the words spoken as the preacher recites the vows, etc.

**UNITY CANDLE OR SAND**

If you choose to use a unity candle or unity sand, this is usually done after the rings are exchanged. I can play a song during this time: “SONG #4.” A song of your choosing that seems right for the couple. I don’t usually play the whole song, just enough to fill the time it takes to light the candle and get back in place at the altar. This is typically 60 to 90 seconds. I have seen couples take their mother a rose during this time.

**SONG #4** \_\_\_\_\_

**RECESSIONAL**

At the end, after the “kiss,” the couple is presented as Mr. and Mrs. and I play a song as everyone cheers and the couple exits. This can be the traditional wedding trumpets or any fun song of your choosing. I’ve used anything from Natalie Cole’s “This Will Be” to the Black Eyed Peas. I usually continue this song “SONG #5”

as the wedding party exits and finally the grandparents and parents are escorted out. Then I fade the music and allow your officiant to invite everyone to the reception and dismiss the congregation.

**SONG #5** \_\_\_\_\_

**USING MUSICIANS**

You may wish to use musicians or have a “reading” performed during your ceremony. I have worked with many musicians to amplify their guitar or keyboard, even a flute or violin through my system. I can also play an instrumental and supply a cordless mic for your singer or if someone is going to do a reading.

**REHEARSAL**

I usually do not attend the rehearsal. I can make a CD with all your songs in order to use with a boom box for rehearsal. If I’m available and your ceremony is very complex with multiple musicians, etc., I may attend and set up equipment for the rehearsal for a small additional fee.