



The Episcopal Church of Bethesda-by-the-Sea

Palm Beach, Florida

Wedding Music Guidelines

General information Wedding music is planned by the bride and groom in consultation with Harold Pysher, our *Associate for Music and Liturgy*, who serves as Organist for all weddings at Bethesda-by-the-Sea. If he is unavailable for your wedding, he will secure the services of another qualified organist. The bridal couple should contact Mr. Pysher well in advance of the wedding date to set up an appointment (561-835-9904, ext. 4). The couple may come with requests and/or ideas about specific music, but they should certainly feel no obligation to do so—Mr. Pysher is prepared to offer suggestions of music suitable for your ceremony. Your wedding is a service of the church, and, as such, the music must be deemed appropriate for the occasion. Bethesda-by-the-Sea does not permit so-called “Contemporary Christian” or “Praise” music or pre-recorded music (CDs, etc.). Our rule of thumb is this: if a particular piece is deemed appropriate for our Sunday morning worship services, it is appropriate for your wedding; the reverse also holds true.

Processionals It is not necessary that the music for a wedding Processional (entrance of the wedding party) be in march tempo; it is enough that it have a feeling of movement and mood of dignity and joy. Trumpet tunes work very well since they are majestic and easy to conclude when the entire wedding party is in place. It is preferable to use one piece of music for the Processional. Music for the Recessional (at the end of the service) should generally be rather fast and joyful. The so-called “traditional” wedding marches are not traditional Church music at all—these two pieces were popularized by Hollywood. Wagner’s *Lohengrin* march is played after a doomed wedding, and Mendelssohn’s march from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* is the music played for the clowning of Puck. Neither the Wagner nor the Mendelssohn is used at Bethesda-by-the-Sea.

Soloists We have a large building which requires the skills of a professionally-trained singer. There is no amplification available for the singer. If you desire to use a soloist, the best solution is to have Mr. Pysher arrange for one of the Bethesda Choir soloists to sing. Secular love songs, music from movies, and pop music are not permitted in a sacred ceremony.

Instrumentalists may occasionally be desired. If so, ask Mr. Pysher to secure the services of professional musicians. *Please do not hire any instrumentalists until you have spoken to Mr. Pysher.*

Additional Fees When a soloist (vocal or instrumental) is used, there is a fee for the soloist as well as an additional organist’s fee for each rehearsal with the soloist(s).

July 15, 2009