



Advice on Readings, Hymns and Music for Your Wedding

Bible Readings

There are many popular and exciting readings. Read some of these together and see if what they say seems important to you:-

God creates women and men to look after the earth

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, ^[b] and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." ***Genesis, Chapter 1, verses 26-28***

A love poem between two lovers

¹⁰ My lover spoke and said to me, "Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, and come with me.

¹¹ See! The winter is past; the rains are over and gone. ¹² Flowers appear on the earth; the season of singing has come, the cooing of doves is heard in our land. ¹³ The fig tree forms its early fruit; the blossoming vines spread their fragrance. Arise, come, my darling; my beautiful one, come with me." Place me like a seal over your heart, like a seal on your arm; for love is as strong as death, its jealousy ^[a] unyielding as the grave. ^[b] It burns like blazing fire, like a mighty flame. ^[c] ⁷ Many waters cannot quench love; rivers cannot wash it away. If one were to give all the wealth of his house for love, it would be utterly scorned. ***Song of Solomon, 2: 10-13; 8, v 6&7***

Jesus teaches how to live life that brings true happiness

¹Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, ²and he began to teach them saying: ³"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted. ⁵Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. ⁶Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. ⁷Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. ⁸Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God. ⁹Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God. ¹⁰Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ***Matthew, Chapter 5, verses 1-10***

Jesus teaches about marriage, and welcomes children

⁶"But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.'^[a] ⁷"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife,^[b] ⁸and the two will become one flesh.'^[c] So they are no longer two, but one. ⁹Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." ¹³People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. ¹⁴When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. ¹⁵I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." ¹⁶And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. ***Mark: 10: 6-9, 13-16 .***

What happens when Jesus attends a wedding reception

¹On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, ²and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine." ⁴"Dear woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied, "My time has not yet come." ⁵His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

⁶Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.^[a] ⁷Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. ⁸Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, ⁹and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside ¹⁰and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now." ¹¹This, the first of his miraculous signs, Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee. He thus revealed his glory, and his disciples put their faith in him. **John 2: 1-11**

Love, actually!

¹If I speak in the tongues^[a] of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames,^[b] but have not love, I gain nothing. ⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. ⁸Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. ¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. ¹²Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. ¹³And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. **1**

Corinthians: 13

Committing to each other

²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²²Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour. ²⁴Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶to make her holy, cleansing^[a] her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church— ³⁰for we are members of his body. ³¹"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."^[b] ³²This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. **Ephesians 5: 21-33**

Seeing the good side...

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. **Philippians 4: 4 – 9**

Getting the perfect relationship

¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. ¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. **Colossians 3: 12 – 17**

Being a good lover!

⁷Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹²No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. **1 John 4: 7 - 12**

Hymns

There are usually two or three hymns during a wedding service. Try to find hymns that are familiar to those who will be present - and are easy to sing!

All Things Bright and Beautiful

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.

Each little flower that opens,
Each little bird that sings,
He made their glowing colours,
He made their tiny wings.
All things bright, etc.

The purple-headed mountain,
The river running by,
The sunset, and the morning
That brightens up the sky:
All things bright, etc.

The cold wind in the winter,
The pleasant summer sun,
The ripe fruits in the garden,
He made them every one.
All things bright, etc.

He gave us eyes to see them,
And lips that we might tell
How great is God Almighty,
Who has made all things well.
All things bright, etc.

Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me,
I once was lost, but now I'm found,
Was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fear relieved,
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares
We have already come,
'Twas grace that brought us safe thus far,
And grace will lead us home.

When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We've no less days to sing God's praise
Than when we first begun.

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch like me,
I once was lost, but now I'm found,
Was blind, but now I see.

Be Our Chief Guest, Lord (Sung to the tune of Morning Has Broken)

Be our chief guest, Lord,
Lord of all living,
Lord of all loving,
This wedding day:
Bind us together
In your sure keeping,
So we may never
Wander away.

Bless all who have brought us
Up from our childhood,
Caring, forgiving,
Through the long day:
May the same spirit
Shine in our home, Lord,
Lighting our pathway,
We humbly pray.

Bless all our friends, Lord,
Happy and true friends,
Laughing or crying,
Always the same:
Bright with this friendship,
May our own home be
Ready to welcome
All in your name.

Be our chief guest, Lord,
Lord of all living,
Warm with compassion
Showing the way:
Keep us together
In loving service,
Families and friends, Lord,
This wedding day.

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways!
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives thy service find,
In deeper reverence praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with thee
The silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love!

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still small voice of calm!

Give Me Oil in My Lamp Keep Me Burning

Give me oil in my lamp keep me burning
Give me oil in my lamp, I pray,
Give my oil in my lamp, keep me burning,
Keep me burning 'till the end of day.

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,
Sing hosanna to the King of kings!
Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,
Sing hosanna to the King!

Give me peace in my heart, keep me resting,
Give me peace in my heart, I pray.
Give me peace in my heart, keep me resting,
Keep me resting 'till the end of day.

Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,
Sing hosanna to the King of kings!
Sing hosanna, sing hosanna,
Sing hosanna to the King!

Guide Me, O Thou Great Redeemer

Guide me, o thou great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty:
hold me with thy powerful hand:
bread of heaven
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain
whence the healing stream doth flow
let the fiery cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield.

When I tread the verge of Jordan
bid my anxious fears subside:
death of death, and hell's destruction
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs and praises
I will ever give to thee.

Immortal, Invisible

Immortal, invisible, God only wise,
In light inaccessible hid from our eyes,
Most blessed, most glorious, the Ancient of Days,
Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise.

Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light,
Nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in might;
Thy justice like mountains high soaring above
Thy clouds which are fountains of goodness and love.

To all life thou givest, to both great and small;
In all life thou livest, the true life of all;
We blossom and flourish as leaves on the tree,
And wither and perish; but naught changeth thee.

Great Father of glory, pure Father of light,
Thine angels adore thee, all veiling their sight;
All laud we would render: O help us to see
'Tis only the splendour of light hideth thee.

Jesus Stand Among Us

Jesus, stand among us at the meeting of our lives,
Be our sweet agreement at the meeting of our eyes;
O, Jesus, we love You, so we gather here,
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.

So to You we're gathering out of each and every land,
Christ the love between us at the joining of our hands;
O, Jesus, we love You, so we gather here,
Join our hearts in unity and take away our fear.

Lead us, Heavenly Father

Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us
O'er the world's tempestuous sea;
Guard us, guide us, keep us, feed us,
For we have no help but thee;
Yet possessing every blessing,
If our God our Father be.

Saviour, breathe forgiveness o'er us:
All our weakness thou dost know;
Thou didst tread this earth before us,
Thou didst feel its keenest woe;
Lone and dreary, faint and weary,
Through the desert thou didst go.

Spirit of our God, descending,
Fill our hearts with heavenly joy,
Love with every passion blending,
Pleasure that can never cloy:
Thus provided, pardoned, guided,
Nothing can our peace destroy.

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Love divine, all loves excelling,
Joy of heaven, to earth come down,
Fix in us thy humble dwelling,
All thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesu, thou art all compassion,
Pure unbounded love thou art;
Visit us with thy salvation,
Enter every trembling heart.

Come, almighty to deliver,
Let us all thy grace receive;
Suddenly return, and never,
Never more thy temple leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
Serve thee as thy hosts above;
Pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,
Glory in thy perfect love.

Finish then thy new creation:
Pure and spotless let us be;
Let us see thy great salvation,

Perfectly restored in thee;
Changed from glory into glory,
Till in heaven we take our place,
Till we cast our crowns before thee,
Lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Morning Has Broken

Morning has broken like the first morning;
Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning!
Praise for them springing fresh from the Word!

Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven,
Like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden,
Sprung in completeness where His feet pass.

Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning,
Born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation; praise ev'ry morning,
God's recreation of the new day!

O Jesus I Have Promised

O Jesus, I have promised
To serve thee to the end;
Be thou for ever near me,
My Master and my Friend:
I shall not fear the battle
If thou art by my side,
Nor wander from the pathway
If thou wilt be my guide.

O let me feel thee near me:
The world is ever near;
I see the sights that dazzle,
The tempting sounds I hear;
My foes are ever near me,
Around me and within;
But, Jesus, draw thou nearer,
And shield my soul from sin.

O let me hear thee speaking
In accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion,
The murmurs of self-will;
O speak to reassure me,
To hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen,
Thou guardian of my soul.

O Jesus, thou hast promised
To all who follow thee,
That where thou art in glory
There shall thy servant be;

And, Jesus, I have promised
To serve thee to the end:
O give me grace to follow,
My Master and my friend.

O let me see thy foot-marks,
And in them plant mine own;
My hope to follow duly
Is in thy strength alone:
O guide me, call me, draw me,
Uphold me to the end;
And then in heaven receive me,
My Saviour and my friend.

O Perfect Love

O perfect Love, all human thought transcending,
Lowly we kneel in prayer before Thy throne,
That theirs may be the love which knows no ending,
Whom Thou forevermore dost join in one.

O perfect Life, be Thou their full assurance,
Of tender charity and steadfast faith,
Of patient hope and quiet, brave endurance,
With childlike trust that fears nor pain nor death.

Grant them the joy which brightens earthly sorrow;
Grant them the peace which calms all earthly strife,
And to life's day the glorious unknown morrow
That dawns upon eternal love and life.

Hear us, O Father, gracious and forgiving,
Through Jesus Christ, Thy coeternal Word,
Who, with the Holy Ghost, by all things living
Now and to endless ages art adored.

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there is hatred let me bring your love;
Where there is injury your pardon, Lord;
And where there's doubt true faith in you.

Refrain:

*Oh, Master grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand;
To be loved as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of your peace.
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope;
Where there is darkness, only light;
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Refrain

Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
In giving to all men that we receive;
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.
Refrain

Praise My Soul The King of Heaven

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven;
To His feet thy tribute bring.
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Evermore His praises sing:
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise the everlasting King.

Praise Him for His grace and favour
To our fathers in distress.
Praise Him still the same as ever,
Slow to chide, and swift to bless.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Glorious in His faithfulness.

Frail as summer's flower we flourish,
Blows the wind and it is gone;
But while mortals rise and perish
Our God lives unchanging on,
Praise Him, Praise Him, Hallelujah
Praise the High Eternal One!

Fatherlike He tends and spares us;
Well our feeble frame He knows.
In His hands He gently bears us,
Rescues us from all our foes.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Widely yet His mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore Him;
Ye behold Him face to face;
Sun and moon, bow down before Him,
Dwellers all in time and space.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise with us the God of grace.

The King of Love My Shepherd is

The King of love my Shepherd is,
whose goodness faileth never:
I nothing lack if I am his
and he is mine for ever.

Where streams of living water flow
my ransomed soul he leadeth,
and where the verdant pastures grow
with food celestial feedeth.

Perverse and foolish oh I strayed,
but yet in love he sought me

and on his shoulder gently laid
and home rejoicing brought me.

In deaths dark vale I fear no ill
with thee, dear Lord, beside me;
thy rod and staff my comfort still,
thy cross before to guide me.

Thou spread'st a table in my sight;
thy unction grace bestoweth:
and O what transport of delight
from thy pure chalice floweth!

And so through all the length of days
thy goodness faileth never:
good Shepherd, may I sing thy praise
within thy house forever.

The minister or the organist at the church where you are to be married will be pleased to help you make your choice.

Processional music

Many couples choose the traditional "Bridal March" from Lohengrin by Wagner and "Wedding March" by Mendelssohn. However, there is other music that can be chosen, so if you want something different, talk to your organist about this. They will advise on what will sound good on the instrument in church. Some churches allow recorded music to be used; speak to your minister.

Useful Websites

There are a number of wedding websites with suggestions for music and readings that you could choose:

www.yourchurchwedding.org

This is a great site from the Church of England and has all you need to know about planning a wedding.

www.ukmagic.co.uk

View the lyrics and also listen to music for hymns.

www.2-in-2-1.co.uk

The 'Wedding Centre' section of this site has lots of suggestions about hymns.

www.confetti.co.uk

Includes the words and music of the more popular wedding hymns, as well as suggestions for readings.

www.weddingguide.co.uk

The Information and Advice section has suggestions for readings and music including clips of the more popular **processional music** to help you make your choice.

www.weddings.co.uk/info

This gives some Biblical and other readings for your wedding.

For further information/advice:

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