



MUSIC FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS

by Sudhi Salooja

I knew I wanted to be a musician when I was three years old. I trained at The Royal College of Music studying violin, piano and singing and successfully completed my degree.

In the past decade I have performed in about 80 weddings, and I never tire of the buzz at these events – the unmistakable combination of love and joy. When possible, I work with another musician called Jane Saunders who plays harp, piano and organ. So much is involved in putting on a wedding but music really adds magic to the day. Many months later, the music can be one of the most memorable things about the occasion.

For a wedding service, music can be played as guests arrive at the church, the couple walk up the aisle, during the signing of the register and as the couple leave the church. This is in addition to the hymns.

I am always happy to advise with the music choice and, for a small extra cost, we will meet the couple to play and discuss the options at length. We have a list of popular pieces which we recommend or a specific piece may be requested – or even a favourite composer which helps us shape the programme. Occasionally we come across something completely different

A Celtic blessing was requested last year during the signing. A simple, enchanting melody sung and accompanied by harp.

*Deep peace of the running wave to you
[...]May peace fill your soul.*

This might be a delightful choice for people who have Celtic roots or an affinity with nature.

Recently, we played *Eine Kleine Nacht Music* as the couple left the church and were surprised and delighted that the whole church started to hum along!

Of course, things don't always go as planned on the day! The bride is sometimes late in which case, we play until she arrives, an extra half hour sometimes. Despite the sweat on the groom's brow, when the bride arrives in all her glory, it seems the wait has been well worth it!

Music for wedding receptions or parties is usually background music. Sometimes I play solo violin, other times I work with Jane and offer a variety of music from Folk & Gypsy to Classical & Celtic. People often come up and say we are playing their favourite piece – or a tune they used to hear in their childhood.

I love these exchanges.

Last year a friend of mine, Marion died and her partner, Mike wanted some music at her funeral. I couldn't decide whether to play violin or sing but we decided on *Ave Maria*. Her mother had been an opera singer. Just before I stood up to sing, I was emotionally stirred by a young family weeping behind me. I had to concentrate hard to keep my voice steady and when I finished, I wished I had played the violin instead! Later, Mike told me he felt Marion sit next to him and hold his hand during *Ave Maria*. He was transported and full of wonder. It was a humbling moment for me. You never know how music will touch others.



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Music for Weddings

Soprano and Violin for Services
Violin & Harp for Receptions / Services

Weddings Funerals Anniversaries

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