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Notes for a service of Prayer & Dedication after a Civil Marriage

1 The Nature of the Service

The service is one in which the couple - already married - wish to dedicate to God their life together. Because it is not a marriage service, banns may not be called nor any entry made in the Register of Marriages.

2 Entrance of the Couple

Husband and wife should enter the church together without ceremony and sit together at the front of the church.

3 The Prayers

Other prayers may be used, especially when they form part of the particular Christian tradition of the husband or wife.

4 The Rings

Because the marriage has already taken place, no ring is to be given or received in the course of the service. If a ring is worn and the prayer of blessing is to be used, the hand should be extended towards the minister.

5 The Minister

When the service is not led by a priest, the Grace is used in place of the Blessing.

6 Holy Communion

The structure of the Marriage Service within the Order for the Celebration of Holy Communion should be followed. The Introduction in this service replaces the Introduction; Prayers of Penitence must be used; also, in the Liturgy of the Word, there must be a Gospel reading, preceded by either one or two other readings from Scripture and followed by a sermon. This is followed by the Dedication and the Prayers, and the Liturgy of the Sacrament follows. Any of the proper material in the Marriage Service within the Order for the Celebration of Holy Communion may be used.

An Order for
Prayer & Dedication after a Civil Marriage
Common Worship

ORDER OF THE SERVICE

Numbers or portions in brackets are optional

(1) *The couple enter together to music or a hymn*

2 *minister* The Lord be with you
 All **And also with you**

minister

N and N, you stand in the presence of God as man and wife to dedicate to him your life together, that he may consecrate your marriage and empower you to keep the covenant and promise you have solemnly declared.

[The Bible teaches us that marriage is a gift of God in creation and a means of his grace, a holy mystery in which man and woman become one flesh. It is God's purpose that, as husband and wife give themselves to each other in love throughout their lives, they shall be united in that love as Christ is united with his Church.

Marriage is given, that husband and wife may comfort and help each other, living faithfully together in need and in plenty, in sorrow and in joy. It is given, that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love, and, through the joy of their bodily union, may strengthen the union of their hearts and lives. It is given as the foundation of family life in which children may be [born and] nurtured in accordance with God's will, to his praise and glory. This is the meaning of the marriage you have made.]

You now wish to affirm your desire to live as followers of Christ, and you have come to him, the fountain of grace, that, strengthened by the prayers of the Church, you may be enabled to fulfil your marriage vows in love and faithfulness.

Let us keep silence and remember God's presence with us now.

God is love, and those that live in love live in God and God lives in them.

3 All:

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The following Summary of the Law may be said

4 *minister*

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: The first commandment is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is the only Lord. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these.

All Amen. Lord have mercy

A minister may use these or other suitable words

5 God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, Jesus Christ, to save us from our sins, to be our advocate in heaven, and to bring us to eternal life.

Let us confess our sins, in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all.

or

6 We come to God as one from whom no secrets are hidden, to ask for his forgiveness and peace.

One of the following forms of Confession and Absolution may be used

7 All
Lord our God,
in our sin we have avoided your call.
Our love for you is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.
Have mercy on us;
deliver us from judgement;
bind up our wounds and revive us;
in Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The minister says

The Lord forgive you your sin,
unite you in the love which took Christ to the cross,
and bring you in the Spirit to his wedding feast in heaven.

All Amen.

(or)

8 Lord, in our weakness you are our strength.
Lord, have mercy.
All Lord, have mercy.

Lord, when we stumble, you raise us up.
Christ, have mercy.
All Christ, have mercy.

Lord, when we fail, you give us new life.
Lord, have mercy.
All Lord, have mercy.

The minister says

May God in his goodness forgive us our sins,
grant us strength in our weakness,
and bring us to eternal life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

The Collect (*minister*)

9 God our Father, you have taught us through your Son that love is the fulfilling of the law. Grant to your servants, that loving one another, they may continue in your love until their lives' end. through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

10 *At least one reading from the Bible is used here*

(11) *If there are two readings, a HYMN may be sung between them.*

(12) *A SERMON may be preached here or at 17.*

THE DEDICATION

13 *The husband and wife face the minister
The minister then says...*

N and N, you have committed yourselves to each other in marriage, and your marriage is recognised by law.

The Church of Christ understands marriage to be, in the will of God, the union of a man and a woman, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till parted by death. Is this your understanding of the covenant and promise that you have made?

Husband and wife It is

the minister says to the husband

N, have you resolved to be faithful to your wife, forsaking all others, so long as you both shall live?

**Husband That is my resolve,
with the help of God.**

the minister says to the wife

N, have you resolved to be faithful to your husband, forsaking all others, so long as you both shall live?

**Wife That is my resolve,
with the help of God.**

14 *The minister may say...*

Heavenly Father, by your blessing let these rings be to N and N a symbol of unending love and faithfulness and of the promises that they have made to each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

15 *The minister says to the people...*

N and N have here affirmed their Christian understanding and resolve in the marriage which they have begun. Will you their families and friends, support and uphold them in their marriage, now and in the years to come?

All We will

16a *The husband and wife say together...*

Heavenly Father, we offer you our souls and bodies, our thoughts and words and deeds, our love for one another. Unite our wills in your will, that we may grow together in love and peace all the days of our life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

16b *minister*

Almighty God, give you grace to persevere, that he may complete in you the work he has already begun, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

16c *minister*

The Lord bless you and watch over you,
the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you, the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace all the days of your life. Amen.

(17) *A SERMON may be preached here*

(18) *A HYMN may be sung*

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

One or more of the following prayers may be used

19a Almighty God, you send your Holy Spirit to be the light and life of all your people. Open the hearts of these your servants to the riches of his grace, that they may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit in love and joy and peace. Amen.

19b *For the gift of children*

Heavenly Father, maker of all things, you enable us to share in your work of creation. Bless this couple in the gift and care of children, that their home may be a place of love, security and truth and their children grow up to know and love you in your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

19c *For Families*

Father of all life, whose promise is to be the God of all the families of your people, give grace to N and N in their new life together and bless those for whom they care. Enfold them in your love as they share in their new family, that they may grow up in all things into Christ, who gave himself that all humanity might be made one in him. Amen.

19d Heavenly Father, we are your children, made in your image. Hear our prayer that fathers and mothers, sons and daughters, may find together the perfect love that casts out fear, that leads to eternal life, and grow up together into the full humanity of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

19e *Concluding prayer*

Eternal God, true and loving Father, in holy marriage you make your servants one. May their life together witness to your love in this troubled world; may unity overcome division, forgiveness heal injury, and joy triumph over sorrow, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

19f The Lord's Prayer is said in this form or in its traditional form.

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

19g Traditional form

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.**

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

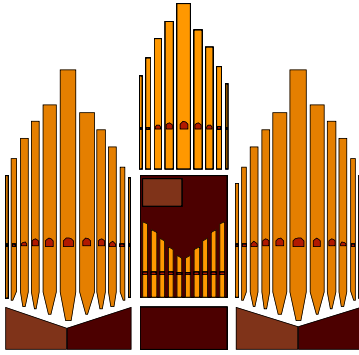
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

(20) *A HYMN may be sung*

21 God the Holy Trinity make you strong in faith and love, defend you on every side, and guide you in truth and peace; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

(22) *Exit music (Couple leave the church together)*

FLITWICK PARISH CHURCH



ORGAN MUSIC FOR YOUR BLESSING

ENTRY MUSIC

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba (Handel)
The Bridal March (from "Lohengrin" by Wagner)
Trumpet Tune (Purcell)
Trumpet Voluntary (Jeremiah Clarke)
Fanfare for a Bride (Noel Rawsthorne)

EXIT MUSIC

Prelude from Te Deum (Charpentier)
Wedding March (Mendelssohn)
Wedding March from Symphony No5 (Saint-Saens)

Special requests are subject to the music being available which, in some cases, you may have to supply to our organist in advance. You may also use a guest artist or musician or a CD. Contact our organist for further advice and assistance

THE CHOIR AT YOUR BLESSING

We strongly recommend that you have the choir at your blessing ceremony for the following reasons

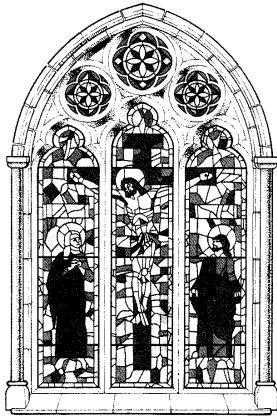
The choir lead the hymn singing. It is a fact that many of your guests may not know the hymns you have chosen. They will feel more comfortable if the choir is there to lead them in the hymn singing. They will also help in the leading of the prayers.

We regret that we can only supply a choir on Saturdays.

Mrs Susan Sims (Organist & Choirmaster)

Telephone (01525) 404264

For consultation by telephone please ring on Thursdays between 8pm-9.30pm only. Appointments with our organist can be made on most Sunday mornings after the service at approximately 11.45am. To secure an appointment please ring on Thursday evenings between 8pm-9.30pm. Thank you



HYMNS AT YOUR BLESSING

We hope that the following suggestions will help you select hymns for your Blessing. It is not an exhaustive list, so please make any suggestions of your own. The following hymns are favourites from previous years.

And did those feet in ancient time (33)
Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart (70)
Dear Lord and Father of mankind (144)
Give me joy in my heart (201)
God, in the planning and purpose of life (213)
Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty (286)
How great thou art (511)
Immortal, invisible, God only wise (314)
Lead us heavenly Father (379)
Lord Jesus Christ (411)
Lord of All hopefulness (413)
Love divine All loves excelling (428)
Morning has broken (450)
Now thank we All our God (474)
O perfect love (533)
Praise my soul the king of heaven (565)
The king of love my shepherd is (649)
The Lords my shepherd (654)
To God be the glory (695)

If you intend to have a printed order of service, please consult with the minister officiating at your Blessing before going to print. This will avoid any misunderstandings about the order in which items are shown on the order of service sheet. If you have any other ideas for hymns, please discuss them with either the officiating minister or with the organist. Thank you.

Common Worship

Readings from Scripture

Readings from the Bible

Any suitable translation may be used.

Old Testament and Apocrypha

R1. Genesis 1.26-28

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

So God created humankind in his image,
in the image of God he created them;
male and female he created them.

God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

R2. Song of Solomon 2.10-13; 8.6,7

My beloved speaks and says to me:

"Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away;

for now the winter is past,
the rain is over and gone.

The flowers appear on the earth;
the time of singing has come,
and the voice of the turtle dove
is heard in our land.

The fig tree puts forth its figs,
and the vines are in blossom;
they give forth fragrance.

Arise, my love, my fair one,
and come away."

Set me as a seal upon your heart,
as a seal upon your arm;

for love is strong as death,
passion fierce as the grave.

Its flashes are flashes of fire,
a raging flame.

Many waters cannot quench love,
neither can floods drown it.

If one offered for love
all the wealth of one's house,
it would be utterly scorned.

Epistles

R3. Romans 12. 1, 2, 9-13

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God - what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honour. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.

R4. Romans 15.1-3,5-7,13

We who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Each of us must please our neighbour for the good purpose of building up the neighbour. For Christ did not please himself; but, as it is written, "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me."

May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

R5. 1 Corinthians 13

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end.

When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways.

For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face.

Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known.

And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

R6. Ephesians 5.21-end

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, be subject to your husbands as you are to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church, the body of which he is the Saviour. Just as the church is subject to Christ, so also wives ought to be, in everything, to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, so as to present the church to himself in splendour, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind - yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church.

Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband.

R7. 1 John 4.7-12

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us.

Gospel Readings

R8. Mark 10.6-9,13-16

Jesus said, "From the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.'

So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.

R9. John 2.1-11

On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water-jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

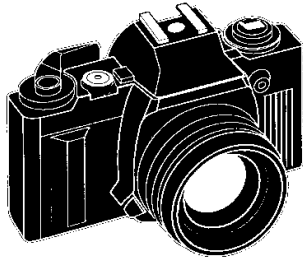
R10. John 15.9-17

Jesus said to his disciples: "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name. I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another."

Photography

at services of Blessing



The official photographer

The photographer is welcome to attend wedding rehearsals so that they get to know the church and its surroundings. Alternatively, the photographer should introduce themselves to the minister conducting the ceremony on the day if you have not met previously.

Photographs may be taken in the church grounds and inside the church by official photographers. We do not accept liability arising from insurance claims due to injury, loss or damage of equipment.

Arrival of the Bride

The photographer may wish to take pictures of the Bride and Groom before the ceremony and therefore, the Bridal party should arrive at the church before the prescribed time of the service.

The photographer should be aware that there may be other ceremonies on the day and must therefore ensure that all concerned arrive at the church door on time. On no account must the ceremony be delayed by photography. If this is the case the time for photographs at the end of the service will be seriously curtailed.

During the church service

Photography will be allowed with the exception of video...

- during the entry of the bride and groom (flash permitted)
- from the back of the church during a hymn (timed exposure only)
- at the exit of the bride and groom (flash permitted)

Photography following the service

Weather permitting, the couple should be taken out of the church via the South door for photographs as soon as the ceremony has ended. A photograph at the south Porch needs to be quick so as not to hold up the exit of guests. Re-entry to the church for further photographs is not allowed unless permission is given by the officiating minister.

Remember if there are other ceremonies, you only have a short time outside the church.

All confetti photography must take place at the Lych Gate only and not outside the porch.

Video recordings and copyright

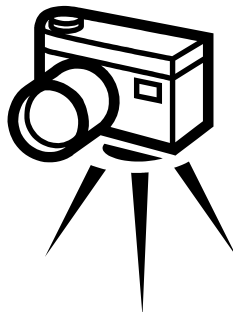
Both the service and any music used in the ceremony is copyright and therefore subject to the conditions of the law relating to any kind of recording.

The Church does not give the photographer any rights of copyright-only permission for the ceremony to be filmed by one camera under the direction of the minister.

The couple pay a fee for this permission to the church. It is therefore up to the photographer to see that they have the necessary licence. Proof of this documentation may be asked for by the minister conducting the service.

Happy relations

We appreciate that you have a job to do on behalf of the Bride and Groom and for the most part we ourselves enjoy good relations with you all. However, from time to time, due to lack of communication and sometimes, respect for the dignity of the occasion, a few wires get crossed. You can avoid such difficulties and misunderstandings by observing this code of practice.



Thank you for your co-operation. If you have any further questions please contact:

Revd. Michael Bradley
26, Dew Pond Road, Flitwick, Bedford MK45 1RT
Telephone: 01525 712369



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

The Parish Church of Flitwick
St. Peter & St. Paul

Contact information

Web site: www.flitwickchurch.org.uk

Vicar

Canon Michael Bradley
26, Dew Pond Road, Flitwick, Bedford MK45 1RT
Telephone: (01525) 712369
E-mail: mfjbradley@btopenworld.com

Organist

Mrs. Susan Sims
12 Church Road, Maulden, Bedford MK45 2AU
Telephone: (01525) 404264
Email: susansims99@yahoo.co.uk

Flower arrangements

Mrs. Pat Payne
Telephone (01525) 750881

BLESSING FEES 2010

With effect from the 1st January 2009 the following fees will be applicable for Blessing Services at Flitwick Parish Church

Blessing Service Fee	£444.00
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Optional extras (each)	
Bells (Weekends only)	£80.00
Choir (Saturday only)	£60.00
Video permission	£80.00

FEES

A Deposit of **£50.00** is payable on booking your service, making cheques payable to "Flitwick Parish Church". Deposits paid will be deducted from your total fees. You may also pay cash.

Balance of Fees are payable at least seven working days before your Blessing service and, if you wish to pay by cheque, please make it payable to, "Rev. M.J. Bradley". You may also pay cash.

VIDEOS

Arrangements for the video recording of your service may only be made with the officiating minister and under their direction. We must point out that that we are only giving permission to video the service in the church with one camera and that this does not cover copyright arrangements, for which you are responsible. Please see further details on the photographers leaflet in your Blessing preparation book.

FLOWER ARRANGEMENTS

As you will see from the fee table, some flowers are provided in the church and will be there for your service. However, you might like to have additional arrangements or a particular colour scheme. Whatever you decide, please speak with Mrs. Payne whose telephone details are shown below.

If you need any further assistance, please get in touch with any of the contacts listed below. Meanwhile, we trust that your special day at Flitwick will be a very happy and memorable occasion.

Vicar

Canon Michael Bradley
26, Dew Pond Road, Flitwick, Bedford MK45 1RT
Telephone: (01525) 712369 E-mail: mjbradley@btopenworld.com

Organist

Mrs. Susan Sims
12 Church Road, Maulden, Bedfordshire MK45 2AU
Telephone: (01525) 404264 Email: susansims99@yahoo.co.uk

Flower arrangements

Mrs. Pat Payne
Telephone: (01525) 750881

Blessing Details Form 2010

Full Names

Date & time of service in church

The Service

Please confirm if you have booked any of the following extras:-

Bells Choir Video permission Total Fee: £

Printed order of service Yes No

Paragraph numbers

Scripture reading

Sermon? Yes No Wedding rings one or two

Music details

Entry music.....

Hymns (Please give a number if there is one and place hymns in order of preference)

1.....

2.....

3.....

Any other music requested? Yes No

Details please

Exit music

Future address

Post code Telephone No