

# The Book of Common Worship

United Church of Christ in the Philippines  
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Cover Design: Annabelle A. Talap of Lanao District Conference garnered the first prize of poster making contest. The poster entitled "Several Springs, One Stream" depicts a boat filled with people on a stream. The stream shows several sources of springs to represent the heritage of the 16th century Protestant Reformers embodied by the five Protestant denominations: the United Brethren, the Disciples of Christ, the Presbyterians, the Methodists, and the Congregationalists.

The ever-flowing streams reminds the church to continue its evangelistic zeal in a relevant and dynamic way that builds up communities and people. The dove represents the ever-present Holy Spirit who guides the church in its mission, with Christ as the Head and Lord, as represented by the cross. The boat is the church journeying through implying a mission (a goal and direction). The people is the Church's constituents who have the spirit and willingness (the act of rowing) to continue God's mission and proclaim Christ's unity.

# The Book of Common Worship

## FOREWORD

According to William Temple, to worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God, to feed the mind with the truth of God, to purge the imagination by the beauty of God, to open the heart to the love of God, to devote the will to the purpose of God."

To worship is to listen to and be aware of an individual's inborn spirituality that connects one with the creator. It is an encounter wherein a person listens and heeds what this creator bids one to do.

Worship is celebrating God's creatorliness and a person's creatureliness. It is celebrating covenant life. In this act of relating and covenanting, we need guides called liturgical movements. Our God is a God of order so it is necessary to arrange the ritual into a well-planned and relevant order depending upon the ecclesiastical occasion.

It is the minister's responsibility to create an orderly liturgical guide in every worship activity. This book provides suggestions which may be adopted whether in a regular worship or a special occasion.

This Book of Common Worship has been the fruit of the labor of love of the Rev. Lydia Niguidula of facilitating, gathering and editing the materials until the book is ready for printing.

I am sure this book is very helpful in the day to day, Sunday to Sunday, celebration to celebration liturgy that relates to the life of the people.

As we lead the church in worship, there is a need to imbibe the right attitude and mood so that our worship" will become vicarious, soulful and meaningful.

**Bishop ELMER M. BOLOCON**  
**General Secretary, UCCP**

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#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

# TOWARD A FULLER UNDERSTANDING OF CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

## A. The Meaning of Worship

Worship is man's response to an awareness of the presence of God. The response may be in praise and thanksgiving, in utter contrition, or in selfless commitment to the cause of the one worshipped. Worship always has this two-fold action: an awareness of consciousness of a revelation of God. and of God's presence, and a corresponding response or reaction of the worshipper to such an awareness. Where one of these aspects is absent, worship has not really taken place.

What this God-awareness means may seem hard for the modern sophisticated person to grasp. But members of today's generation, at least to a certain extent, do understand the presence or absence of meaning in their individual and corporate lives. At times it may be a sense of fulfillment or an uncanny sense of depth in an experience. This is God-awareness or "cosmic disclosure." As Ian Ramsey says,

*A cosmic disclosure is a situation which has come alive both subjectively and objectively, where a "plain," "flat" situation restricted to the data of sense experience, has taken on "depth" or ... "a new dimension."<sup>1</sup>*

This disclosure or God-consciousness, because it carries the element of mystery with it, is accepted by the Christian as transcendent.

Worship, viewed in this manner, may be said to be a natural daily experience. There are, in fact numerous hallowed moments in a man's life, wherever he is and whatever his station in life may be. Indeed, the experience-in-depth or the experience of the Holy is not confined within a particular time or place, nor is it ever the product of the creative planning of a worship director. Therefore, it can be assumed that God's revelation of himself or his presence may be felt in any aspect of man's existence. This may invade him in his solitude or it may come to him while he is in association with other persons.

## B. The Significance of Worship Rites

What then of those deliberate attempts of religious leaders to plan and direct worship? These are what usually are known as worship rites, worship rituals, celebrations of worship, services of worship, or liturgies. These are public worship rites intended to specific groups at specific times and places. In these rites, participants may safely assume that God is present; Christians believe that God is present in all aspects of life and that his presence may be experienced by anyone. But whether the people become aware of his presence or not is another matter. And still another matter is the question of whether his people will respond to such an awareness or not. In all other aspects of life, as Wilfred Bailey has observed, man is found faithful in his response at times and unfaithful at others. But all of life holds the potential of an experience of the Holy. All of life has possibilities for an encounter with the Eternal. This is man's hope. This is man's faith. On this hope and on this faith lies the possibility of man's experience of God; and from that experience, comes his faithful response.

The worship rite then is the form by which man hopes to experience God, or through which God may be seen as active in life. Evelyn Underhill defines this as "an agreed pattern of ceremonial movements, sounds, and verbal formulas, creating a framework within which corporate, religious action can take place."<sup>2</sup> This is also known as man's *service* to God which derives its meaning from the Greek word, *leitourgia*, which includes the people's response to God in worship, bringing into it the joys, pains, hopes and fears of all their work and all of life. In the service of worship or the liturgy, then, life is acknowledged in its fullness and wholeness. In the service of worship, the whole community gathers together as one body of God's people and in their corporate acts they present their individual and varied needs and concerns.

The worship rite is here understood as much more than form or pattern; it is symbol. As symbol, its most appropriate description is *celebration*. Celebration always points beyond itself; it does not exist for itself alone. Celebration is also a conscious or deliberate effort of a group of persons to come together, to commemorate, or to observe some significant event in their common life, *celebration* and *worship* have certain characteristics in common: a group gathering, a feeling of festivity, a reason for gathering — which may be the significant link among the participants — and a general feeling of genuine camaraderie. The worship rite then as a form of Christian celebration brings together a community of persons to affirm God in their common life with all its joy and sadness, pain and pleasure.

And yet a most controversial question in the Christian church is this matter of meaningful form or ritual. Each generation has sought to discover the form of worship most meaningful in its time and culture. Though none of them have been perfect, form is important because man must worship.

What form, then, ought to be used? On one hand, worshipping man likes the familiar pattern; on the other hand, something in him craves for the new and different. Bard Thompson warned in his day, "When this or that form has outlived its usefulness, let it be changed or discarded: no liturgy is worth being idolized."<sup>3</sup> No form then is absolute, and each generation and each culture must define for itself what is more meaningful for its members. However, there are definitely basic parts that ought to run through the differing forms, although the early Christian churches showed diversity in their liturgical forms, the record in Acts 2:42 summarizes aspects common to all of them:

*They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers. (TEV)*

For today, these parts mean: the Scriptures read and preached about, the sharing of one another's blessings through the offertory, the celebration of the Lord's Supper, and the prayers.

Present-day Christian churches ought to have a basic understanding of their heritage in worship and of the elements which have guided men and women through the centuries of religious experience. Then, on one hand, they would have a fresh understanding of their religious background; on the other, they would enrich their past with the exciting present practices. Thus, contemporary Christian worship will be truly rooted in the Gospel and related to the soil.

Are the public worship rites to be viewed simply as possibilities for worship? *Yes and no!* Yes, in the sense that God is surely going to meet his people whether they are at worship or not, whether they are in church or not. One may certainly hope that God would use man's fumbling efforts in worship rites to encounter his people. And he does. He comes. He is faithful in constantly trying to meet his people. And it is precisely this potential for God's encountering man wherein lies the value and the validity of any man-made ritual. Oliver Power says:

*True worship implies the acceptance of the fact that whatever form of worship we use — the service of morning prayer in a cathedral, or the freest, most informal order of service in an open country church — it is at best a clogged channel through which, we pray, God's Holy Spirit may come to visit us.<sup>4</sup>*

Yes, indeed, the worship rite holds within it the possibility of genuine worship. But, *no* also in that it is not its only reason for existence. Of much more value is the fact that in the rite, life ought to be seen in the perspective of God and in the context of the Holy. As Underhill suggests, "[Christian worship] stands for the total orientation of life towards God."<sup>5</sup> One may never truly experience God in an act of worship, but if in that moment one sees a past event in his life as God's action and accepts it, then the rite has justified its function. If, for another, the moment of worship becomes a moment of accepting God's hand in a future plan, then truly the worship rite has been worth attending. In other words, the worship ritual ought to be an opportunity wherein God's presence may be experienced right then and there, as well as a means whereby God may be acknowledged as participant in all of life. As Baily so eloquently describes it:

*Liturgy is indeed concerned with what the worshipper experiences during the service, but of much greater importance is the concern that worship witness beyond itself to the whole of life.<sup>6</sup>*

### C. Rationale

The worship of God is the chief aim of man and the public worship of God is the most central aspect of a church's life. For Christians, worship always begins with God. God initiates and man responds in the God-man encounter which is the essence of worship.

To talk about God and the priority of God in man's life in a world that has become man-centered is a difficult task. But that is because man, who has been erroneously made to believe that God is only "up there" and distant from man's affairs, refuses to acknowledge God as present in his day-to-day world. And yet, Filipinos have always believed that God is a participant in all of life. It is now only a matter of recovering this belief in Christian context. Ironically, worship has the responsibility of bringing man to an awareness of God.

There are always two elements which must come together in creative encounter in order that worship may take place: the object of worship — a deity or a revered person — and the subject of worship — the worshipper.

For the Christian, any encounter with the deity is always an encounter with God who is the God and Father of Jesus Christ. He is the Object of Christian worship. This God is manifested in and through Jesus Christ who was himself also a Man from Nazareth. It is through Jesus Christ that man, the Subject, responds to God. In fact, as Roger Hazelton has said, it is through Christ that a relationship between God and man is maintained. Furthermore, Christian worship acknowledges the fact of the Holy Spirit. If man responds to God's calling or to an awareness of his presence, it is primarily the prompting of the Holy Spirit, for what makes the service a real act of worship," says Oscar Cullman, "is the Holy Spirit."<sup>7</sup> Indeed, Raymond Abba affirms that "true worship can spring only from the activity of the Holy Spirit."<sup>8</sup> Thus, the first element of worship for the Christian is the God whom Jesus Christ acknowledges as Lord and Father. Worship, therefore, is imperative, and Christians must worship because they cannot but respond to an awareness of God in Jesus Christ.

Christian worship or liturgy is based on the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In that Gospel, it is clear that man is offered a life of joy and hope in spite of the meaninglessness and despair that may accompany it. The Christian Gospel is not only about the Man who uttered, "Consider the lilies of the field..." but also about the Man who cried at Golgotha, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Therefore, in Christian worship one does not simply focus on the "nice" things of life, removed from its bitter and cruel aspects. What happens *during* the worship service is as important as what happens *after* it. For the essence of worship is not how man encounters his God or that man has met God, but what he does about it. This is why, as Underhill says, "We [ought to] take this strange thing Worship seriously, and give it the status it deserves..."<sup>9</sup> For a man's worship determines the quality and the pattern of his life.

#### **D. Guidelines for Contemporizing Worship**

Experience in a good many "experimental" or "creative" worship services in the past ten years has sharpened the following insights:

First, the content of worship must be consistent with the good news of God in Jesus Christ. Likewise, the form through which this message of God's love in Jesus Christ is to be channeled must in no way deviate from such message. The worship service must therefore proclaim no other *god* but God in Jesus Christ. God, not man, is central in contemporary worship as in all worship.

Second, it is always helpful to know how the ancestors of the Christian faith worshipped and how they acquired worship patterns. In other words, "doing what comes naturally" ought not to be the only criterion for new forms of worship. Rather, worship forms ought to have roots in the Scriptures and the Christians' worthy past.

Third, there are elements or parts of worship that have passed the test of time and culture. A knowledge of their functions in worship is necessary for those who would contemporize worship. While the elements remain the same, their expression may certainly change according to contemporary forms. There are many ways by which the Gospel may be preached, and just as many ways by which sincere prayer may be made. Praise and thanksgiving may be expressed in forms other than song or the spoken word. Similarly, there are many ways by which penitence may be expressed. All these forms may be explored for use in worship services.

Fourth, the language of worship is crucial in conveying meaning. Each generation cultivates its own unique signs and symbols as well as language forms. Very often the language of the worship service is unfamiliar to the worshipper and one has to literally unscramble the words to get to the meaning. Neither should God's Word be



obscured by words that may should intelligent and sophisticated but which ordinary worshippers cannot comprehend nor appreciate.

Fifth, there are on religious or sacred *things* as such to limit the materials for use in worship. Anything and everything may be a channel of God's grace. Hence, anything may be used in worship as long as it proclaims the God of Love.

And finally, a sincere understanding of the people is absolutely necessary. Those who plan worship services must know the people's joys, frustrations, dreams and needs in life. The ritual that will speak to the people is that which speaks to their needs. Better yet, they ought to be involved in the planning. of the service: writing of prayers, choosing of hymns, and even suggesting ideas for the sermon. If this can happen, then worship will truly be the work of the people: their *leitourgia*.

With contemporary worship the possibilities are limitless. It is in fact impossible to capture in print contemporary worship and maintain their acceptability in the varied situations of the life of churches and still remain contemporary. What this book offers are simply guides and models of worship rites which may become springboards for creative and indigenous worship. For this reason, many traditional as well as current materials have been incorporated if only to point a way to contemporizing worship.

# **REGULAR RITES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP**

# A.

## THE LORD'S DAY

### SERVICE OF THE WORD

#### ORDER OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

##### THE PREPARATION

##### SILENT MEDITATION

*If the church uses printed orders of worship, then a prayer or a short meditation on the morning's theme may be printed here.*

##### PRELUDE

##### THE PRAISE AND ADORATION OF GOD

##### CALL TO WORSHIP

*All who are able may stand for one of these calls to worship.*

(A) Leader: O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

People: YOU HAVE SET YOUR GLORY ABOVE THE HEAVENS. OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES AND INFANTS YOU HAVE FOUNDED A BULWARK BECAUSE OF YOUR FOES, TO SILENCE THE ENEMY AND THE AVENGER.

Leader: When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

People: YET YOU HAVE MADE THEM A LITTLE LOWER THAN GOD, AND CROWNED THEM WITH GLORY AND HONOR. YOU HAVE GIVEN THEM DOMINATION OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; YOU HAVE PUT ALL THINGS UNDER THEIR FEET, ALL SHEEP AND OXEN, AND ALSO THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD, THE BIRDS OF THE AIR, AND THE FISH OF THE SEA, WHATEVER PASSES ALONG THE PATHS OF THE SEAS.

Unison: O LORD, OUR SOVEREIGN, HOW MAJESTIC IS YOUR NAME IN ALL THE EARTH!

— (Psalm 8, NRSV)

(B) Leader: We come to worship, not because it is a duty

People: BUT BECAUSE IT IS A DELIGHT;

Leader: Not because a minister call us,

People: BUT BECAUSE GOD CALLED US;

Leader: Not to display to the world our fine garb,

People: BUT TO WITNESS TO THE WORLD OUR FAITH IN GOD;

Leader: Not to smirk at others because of our goodness,

People: BUT TO SEARCH TOGETHER FOR GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS;

Leader: Not to listen as others are condemned,

People: BUT TO BE TOLD HOW WE HAVE SINNED;

Leader: Not to take away whatever God will give us,

People: BUT TO GO AWAY FITTED FOR SERVICE.

Unison: WE WOULD ENCOUNTER THE GOD WHO SEARCHES FOR US.

(C) Leader: Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place?

People: THOSE WHO HAVE CLEAN HANDS AND PURE HEARTS, WHO DO NOT LIFT UP THEIR SOULS TO WHAT IS FALSE, AND DO NOT SWEAR DECEITFULLY

Unison: LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O GATES! AND BE LIFTED UP, O ANCIENT DOORS! THAT THE KING OF GLORY MAY COME IN.

— (Psalm 24:3-4a, 7)

### **INVOCATION** (Leader/Liturgist/Unison)

*All who are able may remain standing.*

(A) Leader or All:

*O GOD our Parent, you are the Source of all that we have and the Creator of all that we are: we praise You and bless You for what You are. Be with us now as we gather in Your name. Help us in our feeble attempts to feel Your presence and be filled with Your Spirit. In Christ's name. Amen.*

(B) ALMIGHTY God, our Creator, we pray that as Your Church gathers again in fellowship with one another, Your presence and power may be felt among us through the Holy Spirit. For we gather in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit, reigns over us as one God. Amen.

(C) WE bow in shuddering awe before the incredible mysteriousness of life that confronts us this day and in this place. We are humbled by the universe that overwhelms us; by beauty that enthralls us; a Providence that has provided for us; a love demonstration that melts us. O God, how marvelous and majestic and unexplainable are Your ways in all the earth! We worship You.

### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

*All who are able may stand.*

### **AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

*All who are able may remain standing.*

*The Doxology may fittingly be sung after the affirmation of faith.*

### **THE CONFESSION OF SIN AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

#### **CALL TO CONFESSION**

(A) Leader: Let us confess our sins to the Eternal God.

(B) IT is clear that none of us has been fully faithful to God and neighbor. In light of this, and in accord with our Lord's instruction, let us make our common confession together, praying also for God's gracious forgiveness.

(C) LET us each look at ourselves in our separation from God, our neighbors and even from ourselves. Let us examine ourselves in silence.

*(Pause for silent payer.)*

Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God. Let us pray together:

#### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*All who are able may kneel.*

(A) O GOD, our Father and Our Mother, we remember all the failures of the past week. Forgive us for any promises we broke, or any resolutions we failed to keep. Forgive us for any friends we failed, or any people we hurt. Forgive us for any carelessness in our work, or any neglect of duty. Forgive us for any mean, ungenerous, or

dishonorable deeds, for any false, impure, or angry word. Grant us grace to show how sorry we are for our failures, and from now on to walk more closely with you. Amen.

- (B) O GOD, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed:  
We have not loved you with all our heart;  
We have not loved our neighbor as ourselves.  
Have mercy upon us, we beseech you;  
Cleanse us from our sins,  
And help us to overcome our faults;  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- (C) Loving God, we ask forgiveness for everything that is wrong in our lives.  
If we have a grievance against anyone,  
If we are jealous of somebody,  
If we are resentful and bitter about anything:  
In the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us and help us.

*(Silence)*

If we have hurt or offended others  
or treated other persons unfairly:  
In the name of Jesus Christ,  
forgive us and help us.

*(Silence)*

If we have gone back on our word or forgotten to keep our promises;  
If we have been dishonest or deceitful: In the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us and help us.

*(Silence)*

#### **KYRIE ELEISON**

*All who are able still kneeling. Here the Kyrie or a choral supplication or a short hymn of penitence may be sung either by the choir or the congregation.*

#### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON OR ABSOLUTION**

- (A) Minister: "The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth." (Psalm 145:18, NRSV)  
"And the mercy of the Lord is everlasting." These are faithful words and by them we are assured of freedom from the shackles of our sin. Take this assurance to heart and live as new men and women. "The Lord be with you!"
- (B) Minister: You are accepted as you now are, timid in your love but aware of your timidity; afraid really to trust those with whom you worship, yet willing to try. Thus God, the only One, without whose forgiveness you cannot be reborn to new courage and trust and love, sees directly through your eyes into your heart. God's unqualified word to us is just this: "I love you, now and always." Amen.
- (C) Minister: We know through Jesus Christ that when we are open to receive forgiveness, the Holy God has long since waited to bestow it. Take this forgiveness seriously, live as free men and women, and let renewed obedience be the mark of your thanksgiving. The peace of God be with you.

**A CANTICLE** *(may be sung here)*

#### **THE INTERCESSION FOR GOD'S PEOPLE**

#### **GENERAL PRAYER/PASTORAL PRAYER**

*The minister or the worship leader or someone **appointed shall lead the people in prayers of petition and intercession, or the Minister may offer a pastoral prayer.***

## **OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER** *(by all)*

### **CHORAL RESPONSE**

*The choral response, if used here need not only supplement the prayer just said, but may also be a canticle which praises God for ,giving the people the opportunity to come to God in prayer and the assurance that God listens.*

### **CHURCH CONCERNS**

*At this time announcements pertaining to the church's ministry, or the strengthening of ties of fellowship, may be made a part of the worship service. Also, the presence of visitors may be acknowledged at this point.*

## **THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OF GOD**

### **HYMN OF PROCLAMATION**

*All who are able may stand.*

The hymn sung here may be a hymn on the Word of God or the Scriptures, or about the Holy Spirit and his work in proclamation of the Word, or else it may be related to the sermon theme.

### **READING OF SCRIPTURE**

Old Testament  
New Testament

### **GLORIA PATRI** *(may be sung hem)*

*All who are able may stand.*

### **SERMON**

## **THE DEDICATION OF LIVES AND LABOR**

### **CALL TO OFFERING**

- (A) Leader: Our words must be followed by our deeds. Let us symbolize the giving of ourselves by the giving of our gifts.
- (B) Teacher: Having heard the Word of God proclaimed and interpreted, let us offer to God our lives and our gifts.

### **THE OFFERTORY**

*Here may be sung by the choir or the congregation an anthem or hymn that speaks about service, discipleship, or dedication.*

### **DOXOLOGY OR A CANTICLE** *(may be sung here)*

### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

*All who are able may stand.*

- (A) Leader: WHAT we bring before you are our monies, O God, a portion of our life's earnings. With them we offer our well-meaning purposes, our vague desires, our confusion about life, our understanding of Your will, our sinful selves. Make them worthy of Your blessings for we offer them with grateful hearts. Amen.
- (B) Leader: WE gladly give back to You, O Creator God, what You have entrusted to -us. Gladly we offer to You ourselves for Your blessing. Use us and our gifts, dear God, in the work of proclaiming Your love to all peoples. Through Christ our Savior. Amen.
- (C) Leader: TAKE our gifts from our hearts and bless them by the Spirit of Christ, that men and women may know Your love is alive, and find hope. Protect from temptation all who handle these dedicated funds. Restrain greedy recipients. Hasten the day when Christ's spirit shall reign in the hearts of all people. Amen.

## **HYMN OF DEDICATION OR COMMITMENT**

This hymn shall carry the message of dedication, consecration, or commitment of lives to God and the divine service. It can further carry out the message of the sermon.

## **BENEDICTION**

(A) Minister: Go now remembering what we have done here. Go, remembering what God has done here. You are a forgiven people, eternally loved, charged to be obedient and responsible wherever you are. Go into the world to be God's people. May God's peace and joy be with you. Amen.

(B) Minister: Here you have heard the Word of God proclaimed;  
Here you have sung praises to the Lord;  
Here you have witnessed God's Love at work among people:  
Now, go out into the world of work and play, proclaiming God's Word to others;  
singing God's praises with others;  
and witnessing to God's Love for others.  
Through Christ our Lord and Savior.  
Amen.

(C) Leader: Glory be to God who can keep you from falling and bring you safe to the glorious presence, innocent and happy.

To God, the only God, who saves us through Jesus Christ our Lord, be the glory, majesty, authority, and power, which he had before time began, now and forever.

All: AMEN.

## **MOMENT OF MEDITATION**

## **POSTLUDE**

# **ORDER OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD II**

## **PRELUDE**

The service may begin with music as the congregation gathers.

## **INSTRUMENTAL SOUNDS**

A native instrument may be sounded.

## **CALL TO WORSHIP**

(A) Pastor: This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalms 118:24, NRSV)

People: BUT THE HOUR IS COMING, AND IS NOW HERE, WHEN THE TRUE WORSHIPPERS WILL WORSHIP THE GOD IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH, FOR THE LORD SEEKS SUCH AS THESE TO WORSHIP THE LORD. GOD IS SPIRIT, AND THOSE WHO WORSHIP GOD MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH. (John 4:23-24, NRSV)

(B) Pastor: O come, let us sing to the Lord and shout with joy to the rock of our salvation!

People: LET US COME INTO GOD'S PRESENCE WITH THANKSGIVING, SINGING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE (Psalm 95:1, 2)

(C) Pastor: O sing to the Lord a new song;

People: SING TO THE LORD, ALL THE EARTH

Pastor: Sing, and give praise to God's name;

People: TELL THE GLAD NEWS OF SALVATION FROM DAY TO DAY. (Psalm 96:1, 2)

## **HYMN OF WORSHIP**

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

#### **(A) Leader or All:**

O Holy God, who by Your love has made us, and through Your love has kept us, and in Your love would make us perfect; we humbly confess that we have not loved You with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and that we have not loved one another as Christ has loved us. Your life is within our souls, but our selfishness has hindered You. We have resisted Your Spirit. We have neglected Your inspirations. Forgive what we have been; help us to amend what we are; and in Your Spirit direct what we shall be; that You may come into the full glory of Your creation, in us and in all people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **(B) Leader or All:**

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment.

Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image; through Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

#### **(C) Leader or All:**

Merciful God, in your gracious presence we confess our sin and the sin of this world. Although Christ is among us as our peace, we are a people divided against ourselves as we cling to the values of a broken world. The profit and pleasures we pursue lay waste the land and pollute the seas. The fears and jealousies that we harbor set neighbor against neighbor and nation against nation. We abuse your good gifts of imagination and freedom, of intellect and reason, and have turned them into bounds of oppression.

Lord, have mercy upon us; heal and forgive us. Set us free to serve you in the world as agents of your reconciling love in Jesus Christ.

### **SILENCE**

Kyrie or Trisagion

### **DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

(A) Pastor: God hears the confession of our hearts and lips. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven all our sins, and by the Holy Spirit we are empowered for new life.

All: WE BELIEVE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.

(B) Pastor: Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether; the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

All: IN JESUS CHRIST, WE ARE FORGIVEN.

(C) Pastor: Almighty God has forgiven you all your sins and has promised to bring you to everlasting life.

All: AMEN.

*A Cantic may be sung.*

### **ANTHEM OR CHORAL PROCLAMATION READING FROM SCRIPTURE**

Old Testament  
Gospel  
Epistle

### **SERMON**



## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

## **UCCP Statement of Faith**

### **WE BELIEVE**

In One God: Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, who provides order, purpose, meaning and fulfillment to all creation.

That in Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary, God became human and is Sovereign Lord of life and history.

That in the Holy Spirit God is present in the world, empowering and guiding believers to understand and live out their faith in Jesus Christ.

### **WE BELIEVE**

That persons are created in the image of God and destined to live in community with God, with other persons and with all creation.

That, by disobedience, they have become sinful, but, by grace through faith, they are redeemed in Jesus Christ.

That being entrusted with God's creation, they are called to participate in the establishment of a just and compassionate social order.

### **WE BELIEVE**

That the Church is the one body of Christ, the whole community of persons reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and entrusted with God's ministry.

### **WE BELIEVE**

That the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness to God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history to illumine, guide, correct and edify believers in their faith and witness.

### **WE BELIEVE**

God is at work, to make each person a new being in Christ, and the whole world, God's Kingdom — in which love, justice and peace prevail.

The Kingdom of God is present where faith in Jesus Christ is shared, where healing is given to the sick, where food is given to the hungry, where light is given to the blind, and where liberty is given to the captive and oppressed.

### **WE BELIEVE**

The resurrection of Jesus Christ has overcome the power of death and gives assurance of life after death.

And we look forward to His coming again in all fullness and glory to make all creation new and to gather all the faithful under God's Kingdom. Amen.

## **CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

The people may be seated. Leaders may announce special concerns for prayer and invite the people to indicate their needs. (See blue sheet)

## **THE OFFERTORY**

As the offering are gathered there may be an anthem or appropriate music.

(A) Leader: Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (II Cor. 9:7, NRSV)

(B) Leader: Let us return to God the offerings of our life and the gifts of the earth. (BCW)

(C) Leader: Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. (Hebrews 13:16, NRSV)

## **CANTICLE**

All who are able may rise as the offering is brought to the chancel and sing a Canticle, after which this prayer be offered in Unison.

(A) All: RECEIVE, O LORD, WE PRAY YOU, THESE OUR OFFERINGS WHICH WE RENDER FOR THE SERVICE OF YOUR CHURCH, AND FOR THE EXTENSION OF YOUR KINGDOM, AND ACCEPT WITH THEM

OUR HEARTS AND LIVES, WHICH WE DESIRE TO CONSECRATE TO YOU; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

(B) All: YOURS, O LORD, ARE GRANDEUR AND POWER, MAJESTY, SPLENDOR, AND GLORY.

ALL IN THE HEAVENS AND ON THE EARTH IS YOURS, AND OF YOUR OWN WE GIVE YOUR. (I Chron. 29:11)

(C) All: BLESSED ARE YOU, GOD OF ALL CREATION; THROUGH YOUR GOODNESS WE HAVE THESE GIFTS TO SHARE. ACCEPT AND USE OUR OFFERINGS FOR YOUR GLORY AND FOR THE SERVICE OF YOUR KINGDOM. BLESSED BE GOD FOREVER.

## **HYMN OF DEDICATION OR THANKSGIVING**

### **CHARGE AND BLESSING**

(A) Pastor: Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold on to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

All: ALLELUIA! AMEN.

(B) Pastor: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord be kind and gracious to you. The Lord took upon you with favor and give you peace.

All: ALLELUIA! AMEN.

(C) Pastor: Go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

All: ALLELUIA! AMEN.

### **POSTLUDE**

## **ORDER OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD III**

### **PRELUDE**

### **INSTRUMENTAL SOUNDS**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

(A) Pastor: O Come, let us worship and bow down: Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

People: ENTER INTO HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING, AND INTO HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE.

(B) Pastor: What shall we return to the Lord for all the good things God has done for us?

People: WE WILL LIFT UP THE CUP OF SALVATION AND CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD. (Psalm 116:12, 13)

(C) Pastor: Cry out with joy the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness. Come into God's presence with singing!

People: FOR THE LORD IS A GRACIOUS GOD, WHOSE MERCY IS EVERLASTING; AND WHOSE FAITHFULNESS ENDURES TO ALL GENERATIONS. (Psalm 100:1, 2, 5)

### **THE INVOCATION**

(A) Leader or All:

Inspirer and Hearer of prayers, You Shepherd and Guardian of your people, we rejoice in the glory of this new day of rest and worship. Safely through another week you have brought us on our way. May our prayers rise like incense to you, and find access to the ear of God who never slumbers nor sleeps. Most of all, may our lives so manifest the love that knows no evil that our prayers shall be no mere form of words, but the expression of souls in love with you and intent on helping the world. Grant us a day such as shall send us forth strong for the duties of the coming week: for Jesus' sake. Amen.

(B) Leader or All:

God of all glory, on this first day you began creation, bringing light out of darkness. On this first day you began your new creation, raising Jesus Christ out of the darkness of death. On this Lord's Day grant that we, the people you create by water and the Spirit, may be joined with all your works in praising you for your great glory. Through Jesus Christ, in union with the Holy Spirit, we praise you now and forever. Amen.

(C) Leader or All:

O God, you are infinite, eternal and unchangeable, glorious in holiness, full of love and compassion, abundant in grace and truth. Your works everywhere praise you, and your glory is revealed in Jesus Christ our Savior. Therefore we praise you, blessed and holy Trinity, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

#### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

#### **CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH**

#### **PASTORAL PRAYER OR THE CHURCH AT PRAYER**

#### **READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES**

Old  
New Testament

#### **CHORAL SUPPLICATION**

#### **CHORAL PROCLAMATION OR HYMN**

#### **SERMON**

#### **OFFERTORY**

##### **Offertory Sentence:**

- (A) Leader: "He that finds his life shall lose it; and he that loses his life shall find it."  
(B) Leader: Freely you have received, freely give. (Matt. 10:8b)  
(C) Leader: Give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Cor. 9:7)

#### **THE DOXOLOGY**

As the offerings are brought forward, the People rise to sing the Doxology or some other canticle.

#### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

All: HUMBLY DO WE LAY OUR GIFTS BEFORE YOU, O GOD, WHO HAS GIVEN TO US THE PRICELESS GIFT OF YOUR SON, JESUS CHRIST. MAY THESE OFFERINGS *BE* ACCOMPANIED BY THE CONSECRATION OF OUR LIVES. AMEN.

#### **HYMN OF COMMITMENT**

#### **BENEDICTION**

#### **THREE-FOLD AMEN**

#### **RECESSIONAL**

## ORDER OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD IV

### ORGAN PRELUDE

### PROCESSIONAL HYMN

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: The Lord is in the holy temple: Let all the earth keep silence before God.  
People: SURELY, THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE.  
Pastor: This is none other than the house of God, and this the gate of heaven.

### INVOCATION (*In Unison*)

O LORD, OUR GOD, GREAT, ETERNAL, WONDERFUL IN GLORY, WHO KEEPS COVENANT AND PROMISE FOR THOSE THAT LOVE YOU WITH THEIR WHOLE HEART, WHO ARE THE LIFE OF ALL, THE HELP OF THOSE THAT FEEL YOU, THE HOPE OF THOSE WHO CRY TO YOU; CLEANSE US FROM OUR SINS, AND FROM EVERY THOUGHT DIS-PLEASING TO YOUR GOODNESS, THAT WITH PURE HEART AND A CLEAN MIND, WITH PERFECT LOVE AND CALM HOPE, WE MAY VEN-TURE CONFIDENTLY AND FEARLESSLY TO PRAY TO YOU THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN. (*4th Century Prayer, Coptic Liturgy of St. Basil*).

### THE LORD'S PRAYER IN UNISON LITANY OF PRAISE

Pastor: O Lord, open our lips.  
People: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHOW FORTH YOUR PRAISE.  
Pastor: Praise the Lord.  
People: THE LORD'S NAME BE PRAISED.

### GLORIA PATRI

### RESPONSIVE READING (*People may be seated*)

Pastor: As the hart pants after the water brooks,  
People: SO PANTS MY SOUL AFTER YOU, O GOD.  
Pastor: My soul thirsts for God, for the living God:  
People: WHEN SHALL I COME AND APPEAR BEFORE GOD? Pastor: My tears have been my meat day and night.  
People: WHILE THEY CONSTANTLY SAY UNTO ME, WHERE IS YOUR GOD?  
Pastor: Why are you cast down, O my soul?  
People: AND WHY ARE YOU DISQUIETED WITHIN ME?  
Pastor: Hope in God:  
People: FOR I SHALL YET PRAISE GOD FOR THE HELP OF THE LORD'S COUNTENANCE.  
Pastor: Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterspouts:  
People: ALL YOUR WAVES AND YOUR BILLOWS ARE GONE OVER ME.  
Pastor: Yet the Lord will command God's loving-kindness in the daytime.  
People: AND IN THE NIGHT THE LORD'S SONG SHALL BE WITH ME, AND MY PRAYER TO THE GOD OF MY LIFE.  
Pastor: Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation:  
People: O DELIVER ME FROM THE DECEITFUL AND UNJUST PEOPLE.  
Pastor: O send out Your light and Your truth: let them lead me:  
People: LET THEM BRING ME TO YOUR HOLY HILL, AND TO YOUR TABERNACLES.  
Pastor: Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, my exceeding joy.  
People: YEA, UPON THE HARP WILL I PRAISE YOU, O GOD, MY GOD.  
Pastor: Why are you cast down, O my soul?  
People: AND WHY ARE YOU DISQUIETED WITHIN ME?  
Pastor: Hope in God:  
People: FOR I SHALL YET PRAISE GOD, WHO IS THE HEALTH OF MY COUNTENANCE AND MY GOD.

**HYMN OF PREPARATION**

**THE SCRIPTURE LESSON**

Old Testament Lesson

New Testament Lesson

**THE PASTORAL PRAYER**

Choral Response

**THE ANTHEM**

**THE SERMON**

**THE OFFERING**

"Freely you have received, freely give. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Matt. 10:8, Acts 20:35)

**THE DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**HYMN OF CONSECRATION**

**THE BENEDICTION**

Response: Sung Amen (*Choir and People*)

**ORGAN POSTLUDE**

## **B.**

# **LORD'S DAY SERVICE WITH THE LORD SUPPER**

### **OUTLINE 1 OF THE LORD'S DAY SERVICE**

**PRAISE AND ADORATION OF GOD**

**INTROIT**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**INVOCATION**

**HYMN OF PRAISE**

**PSALTER OR CREED**

**A CANTICLE OR DOXOLOGY**

**CONFESSION OF SIN AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**CALL TO CONFESSION**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**KYRIE ELEISON**

**ASSURANCE OF GOD'S PARDON**

**A CANTICLE**

**INTERCESSION FOR GOD'S PEOPLE**

**SHARING OF THE CHURCH'S CONCERNS**  
**PASTORAL PRAYER OR MORNING PRAYER**  
**THE LORD'S PRAYER**  
**GLORIA PATRI**

**PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OF GOD**

**HYMN OF PROCLAMATION**  
**READING OF SCRIPTURES**  
**ANTHEM OR GLORIA PATRI** (if not used above)  
**SERMON**

**DEDICATION OF LIVES AND OFFERINGS**

**CALL TO OFFERING**  
**PRESENTATION OF OFFERINGS OF LIFE AND LABOR**  
**OFFERTORY ANTHEM OR HYMN**  
**DOXOLOGY** (if not used above)  
**PRAYER OF DEDICATION AND THANKSGIVING**  
**HYMN OF DEDICATION OR CONSECRATION**  
**BENEDICTION**  
**ASCRPTION OF GLORY**  
**CHORAL OR CONGREGATIONAL AMEN**

## **OUTLINE II OF THE LORD'S DAY SERVICE**

**THE PREPARATION**

**PRELUDE OR ENTRANCE MUSIC**

People greeting one another as they enter.

**SILENT PRAYERS**

**OPENING SENTENCES** (*Minister or Leader*)

Call to Worship, or  
Greetings from the Minister, or  
Words of Welcome from the Leader

**THE CHURCH ACKNOWLEDGES GOD'S ACTION**

**HYMN OF PRAISE**

**INVOCATION**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION** (*All kneeling or sitting*)

Call to Penitence Prayer of Confession

**ASSURANCE OF GOD'S PARDON**

**HYMN OF PROCLAMATION** (*All standing*)

**SCRIPTURE READING**

## SERMON

### THE CHURCH RESPONDS TO GOD

#### INTERCESSION FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Right Hand of Fellowship or Passing of the Peace  
General Prayer or Pastoral Prayer and  
The Lord's Prayer

#### DEDICATION OF LIVES AND MEANS

Call to offering  
Presentation of Selves and Offering  
Prayer of Dedication or Blessing

#### HYMN OF COMMITMENT OR CHALLENGE

#### BENEDICTION

#### SILENT PRAYERS

#### POSTLUDE OR EXIT MUSIC

## ORDER OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

### THE PREPARATION

#### SILENT MEDITATION

*If the church uses printed orders of worship, then a prayer or a short meditation on the morning's theme may be printed here.*

#### PRELUDE

### THE PRAISE AND ADORATION OF GOD

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

*All who are able may stand for one of these calls to worship.*

(A) Leader: O Lord, our Sovereign, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

People: YOU HAVE SET YOUR GLORY ABOVE THE HEAVENS. OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES AND INFANTS  
YOU HAVE FOUNDED A BULWARK BECAUSE OF YOUR FOES, TO SILENCE THE ENEMY AND THE  
AVENGER.

Leader: When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have  
established; what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them?

People: YET YOU HAVE MADE THEM A LITTLE LOWER THAN GOD, AND CROWNED THEM WITH GLORY AND  
HONOR. YOU HAVE GIVEN THEM DOMINATION OVER THE WORKS OF YOUR HANDS; YOU HAVE  
PUT ALL THINGS UNDER THEIR FEET, ALL SHEEP AND OXEN, AND ALSO THE BEASTS OF THE FIELD,  
THE BIRDS OF THE AIR, AND THE FISH OF THE SEA, WHATEVER PASSES ALONG THE PATHS OF THE  
SEAS.

Unison: O LORD, OUR SOVEREIGN, HOW MAJESTIC IS YOUR NAME IN ALL THE EARTH!

— (*Psalm 8, NRSV*)

(B) Leader: We come to worship, not because it is a duty

People: BUT BECAUSE IT IS A DELIGHT;  
 Leader: Not because a minister call us,  
 People: BUT BECAUSE GOD CALLED US;  
 Leader: Not to display to the world our fine garb,  
 People: BUT TO WITNESS TO THE WORLD OUR FAITH IN GOD;  
 Leader: Not to smirk at others because of our goodness,  
 People: BUT TO SEARCH TOGETHER FOR GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS;  
 Leader: Not to listen as others are condemned,  
 People: BUT TO BE TOLD HOW WE HAVE SINNED;  
 Leader: Not to take away whatever God will give us,  
 People: BUT TO GO AWAY FITTED FOR SERVICE.  
 Unison: WE WOULD ENCOUNTER THE GOD WHO SEARCHES FOR US.

- (C) Leader: Who shall ascend the hill of the Lord? And who shall stand in his holy place?  
 People: THOSE WHO HAVE CLEAN HANDS AND PURE HEARTS, WHO DO NOT LIFT UP THEIR SOULS TO WHAT IS FALSE, AND DO NOT SWEAR DECEITFULLY  
 Unison: LIFT UP YOUR HEADS, O GATES! AND BE LIFTED UP, O ANCIENT DOORS! THAT THE KING OF GLORY MAY COME IN.

— (Psalm 24:3-4a, 7)

#### **INVOCATION** (Leader/Lim gist/Unison)

*All who are able may remain standing.*

- (A) Leader or All:

*OGOD our Parent, you are the Source of all that we have and the Creator of all that we am: we praise You and bless You for what You am. Be with us now as we gather in Your name. Help us in our feeble attempts to feel Your presence and be filled with Your Spirit. In Christ's name. Amen.*

- (B) ALMIGHTY God, our Creator, we pray that as Your Church gathers again in fellowship with one another, Your presence and power may be felt among us through the Holy Spirit. For we gather in the Name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit, reigns over us as one God. Amen.
- (C) WE bow in shuddering awe before the incredible mysteriousness of life that confronts us this day and in this place. We are humbled by the universe that overwhelms us; by beauty that enthralls us; a Providence that has provided for us; a love demonstration that melts us. O God, how marvelous and majestic and unexplainable are Your ways in all the earth! We worship You.

#### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

*All who are able may stand.*

#### **AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

*All who are able may remain standing.*

*The Doxology may fittingly be sung after the affirmation of faith.*

#### **THE CONFESSION OF SIN AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

##### **CALL TO CONFESSION**

- (A) Leader: Let us confess our sins to the Eternal God.
- (B) IT is clear that none of us has been fully faithful to God and neighbor. In light of this, and in accord with our Lord's instruction, let us make our common confession together, praying also for God's gracious forgiveness.
- (C) LET us each look at ourselves in our separation from God, our neighbors and even from ourselves. Let us examine ourselves in silence.



*(Pause for silent prayer.)*

Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

Let us pray together:

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

*All who are able may kneel.*

- (A) O GOD, our Father and our Mother, we remember all the failures of the past week. Forgive us for any promises we broke, or any resolutions we failed to keep. Forgive us for any friends we failed, or any people we hurt. Forgive us for any carelessness in our work, or any neglect of duty. Forgive us for any mean, ungenerous, or dishonorable deeds, for any false, impure, or angry word. Grant us grace to show how sorry we are for our failures, and from now on to walk more closely with you. Amen.
- (B) O GOD, we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed:  
We have not loved you with all our heart;  
We have not loved our neighbor as ourselves.  
Have mercy upon us, we beseech you;  
Cleanse us from our sins, and help us to overcome our faults;  
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- (C) Loving God, we ask forgiveness for everything that is wrong in our lives.  
If we have a grievance against anyone,  
If we are jealous of somebody,  
If we are resentful and bitter about anything:  
In the name of Jesus Christ,  
forgive us and help us.

*(Silence)*

If we have hurt or offended others  
or treated other persons unfairly:  
In the name of Jesus Christ,  
forgive us and help us.

*(Silence)*

If we have gone back on our word  
or forgotten to keep our promises;  
If we have been dishonest or deceitful:  
In the name of Jesus Christ, forgive us and help us.

*(Silence)*

### **KYRIE ELEISON**

*All who are able still kneeling. Here the Kyrie or a choral supplication or a short hymn of penitence may be sung either by the choir or the congregation.*

### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON OR ABSOLUTION**

- (A) Minister: "The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth." (Psalm 145:18, NRSV)  
"And the mercy of the Lord is everlasting." These are faithful words and by them we are assured of freedom from the shackles of our sin. Take this assurance to heart and live as new men and women. "The Lord be with you!"
- (B) Minister: You are accepted as you now are, timid in your love but aware of your timidity; afraid really to trust those with whom you worship, yet willing to try. Thus God, the only One, without whose forgiveness you

cannot be reborn to new courage and trust and love, sees directly through your eyes into your heart. God's unqualified word to us is just this: "I love you, now and always." Amen.

- (C) Minister: We know through Jesus Christ that when we are open to receive forgiveness, the Holy God has long since waited to bestow it. Take this forgiveness seriously, live as free men and women, and let renewed obedience be the mark of your thanksgiving. The peace of God be with you.

**A CANTICLE** *(may be sung here)*

## **THE INTERCESSION FOR GOD'S PEOPLE**

### **GENERAL PRAYER/PASTORAL PRAYER**

*The minister or the worship leader or someone appointed shall lead the people in prayers of petition and intercession, or the Minister may offer a pastoral prayer.*

**OUR SAVIOR'S PRAYER** *(by all)*

### **CHORAL RESPONSE**

*The choral response, if used here need not only supplement the prayer just said, but may also be a canticle which praises God for giving the people the opportunity to come to God in prayer and the assurance that God listens.*

### **CHURCH CONCERNS**

*At this time announcements pertaining to the church's ministry, or the strengthening of ties of fellowship, may be made a part of the worship service. Also, the presence of visitors may be acknowledged at this point.*

## **THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OF GOD**

### **HYMN OF PROCLAMATION**

*All who are able may stand.*

The hymn sung here may be a hymn on the Word of God or the Scriptures, or about the Holy Spirit and his work in proclamation of the Word, or else it may be related to the sermon theme.

### **READING OF SCRIPTURE**

Old Testament  
New Testament

**GLORIA PATRI** *(may be sung here)*

*All who are able may stand.*

### **SERMON**

## **THE DEDICATION OF LIVES AND LABOR**

### **CALL TO OFFERING**

- (A) Leader: Our words must be followed by our deeds. Let us symbolize the giving of ourselves by the giving of our gifts.
- (B) Leader: Having heard the Word of God proclaimed and interpreted, let us offer to God our lives and our gifts.

### **THE OFFERTORY**

*Here may be sung by the choir or the congregation an anthem or hymn that speaks about service, discipleship, or dedication.*

**DOXOLOGY OR A CANTICLE** *(in any be sung here)*

## PRAYER OF DEDICATION

*All who are able may stand.*

- (A) Leader: WHAT we bring before you are our monies, O God, a portion of our life's earnings. With them we offer our well-meaning purposes, our vague desires, our confusion about life, our understanding of Your will, our sinful selves. Make them worthy of Your blessings for we offer them with grateful hearts. Amen.
- (B) Leader: WE gladly give back to You, O Creator God, what You have entrusted to us. Gladly we offer to You ourselves for Your blessing. Use us and our gifts, dear God, in the work of proclaiming Your love to all peoples. Through Christ our Savior. Amen.
- (C) Leader: TAKE our gifts from our hearts and bless them by the Spirit of Christ, that men and women may know Your love is alive, and find hope. Protect from temptation all who handle these dedicated funds. Restrain greedy recipients. Hasten the day when Christ's spirit shall reign in the hearts of all people. Amen.

## HYMN OF DEDICATION OR COMMITMENT

This hymn shall carry the message of dedication, consecration, or commitment of lives to God and the divine service. It can further carry out the message of the sermon.

## BENEDICTION

- (A) Minister: Go now remembering what we have done here. Go, remembering what God has done here. You are a forgiven people, eternally loved, charged to be obedient and responsible wherever you are. Go into the world to be God's people. May God's peace and joy be with you. Amen.
- (B) Minister: Here you have heard the Word of God proclaimed; Here you have sung praises to the Lord; Here you have witnessed God's Love at work among people: Now, go out into the world of work and play, proclaiming God's Word to others; singing God's praises with others; and witnessing to God's Love for others. Through Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.
- (C) Leader: Glory be to God who can keep you from falling and bring you safe to the glorious presence, innocent and happy.
- To God, the only God, who saves us through Jesus Christ our Lord, be the glory, majesty, authority, and power, which he had before time began, now and forever.

All: AMEN.

## MOMENT OF MEDITATION

## POSTLUDE

## ORDER OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD II

### PRELUDE

The service may begin with music as the congregation gathers.

### INSTRUMENTAL SOUNDS

A native instrument may be sounded.

### CALL TO WORSHIP

- (A) Pastor: This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (Psalms 118:24, NRSV)

People: BUT THE HOUR IS COMING, AND IS NOW HERE, WHEN THE TRUE WORSHIPPERS WILL WORSHIP THE GOD IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH, FOR THE LORD SEEKS SUCH AS THESE TO WORSHIP THE LORD. GOD IS SPIRIT, AND THOSE WHO WORSHIP GOD MUST WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH. (John 4:23-24, NRSV)

(B) Pastor: O come, let us sing to the Lord and shout with joy to the rock of our salvation!  
People: LET US COME INTO GOD'S PRESENCE WITH THANKSGIVING, SINGING JOYFUL SONGS OF PRAISE. (Psalm 95:1, 2)

(C) Pastor: O sing to the Lord a new song;  
People: SING TO THE LORD, ALL THE EARTH  
Pastor: Sing, and give praise to God's name;  
People: TELL THE GLAD NEWS OF SALVATION FROM DAY TO DAY. (Psalm 96:1, 2)

## **HYMN OF WORSHIP**

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

(A) Leader or All:

O Holy God, who by Your love has made us, and through Your love has kept us, and in Your love would make us perfect; we humbly confess that we have not loved You with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and that we have not loved one another as Christ has loved us. Your life is within our souls, but our selfishness has hindered You. We have resisted Your Spirit. We have neglected Your inspirations. Forgive what we have been; help us to amend what we are; and in Your Spirit direct what we shall be; that You may come into the full glory of Your creation, in us and in all people; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(B) Leader or All:

Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment.

Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image; through Jesus Christ, the light of the world.

(C) Leader or All:

Merciful God, in your gracious presence we confess our sin and the sin of this world. Although Christ is among us as our peace, we are a people divided against ourselves as we cling to the values of a broken world. The profit and pleasures we pursue lay waste the land and pollute the seas. The fears and jealousies that we harbor set neighbor against neighbor and nation against nation. We abuse your good gifts of imagination and freedom, of intellect and reason, and have turned them into bounds of oppression.

Lord, have mercy upon us; heal and forgive us. Set us free to serve you in the world as agents of your reconciling love in Jesus Christ.

### **SILENCE**

Kyrie or Trisagion

### **DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS**

(A) Pastor: God hears the confession of our hearts and lips. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven all our sins, and by the Holy Spirit we are empowered for new life.

All: WE BELIEVE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.

(B) Pastor: Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether; the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

All: IN JESUS CHRIST, WE ARE FORGIVEN.

(C) Pastor: Almighty God has forgiven you all your sins and has promised to bring you to everlasting life.

All: AMEN.

*A Canticle may be sung.*

## **ANTHEM OR CHORAL PROCLAMATION**

### **READING FROM SCRIPTURE**

Old Testament

Gospel

Epistle

### **SERMON**

### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

### **UCCP Statement of Faith**

#### **WE BELIEVE**

In One God: Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, who provides order, purpose, meaning and fulfillment to all creation.

That in Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary, God became human and is Sovereign Lord of life and history.

That in the Holy Spirit God is present in the world, empowering and guiding believers to understand and live out their faith in Jesus Christ.

#### **WE BELIEVE**

That persons are created in the image of God and destined to live in community with God, with other persons and with all creation.

That, by disobedience, they have become sinful, but, by grace through faith, they are redeemed in Jesus Christ.

That being entrusted with God's creation, they are called to participate in the establishment of a just and compassionate social order.

#### **WE BELIEVE**

That the Church is the one body of Christ, the whole community of persons reconciled to God through Jesus Christ and entrusted with God's ministry.

#### **WE BELIEVE**

That the Holy Bible is a faithful and inspired witness to God's self-revelation in Jesus Christ and in history to illumine, guide, correct and edify believers in their faith and witness.

#### **WE BELIEVE**

God is at work, to make each person a new being in Christ, and the whole world, God's Kingdom — in which love, justice and peace prevail.

The Kingdom of God is present where faith in Jesus Christ is shared, where healing is given to the sick, where food is given to the hungry, where light is given to the blind, and where liberty is given to the captive and oppressed.

#### **WE BELIEVE**

The resurrection of Jesus Christ has overcome the power of death and gives assurance of life after death.

And we look forward to His coming again in all fullness and glory to make all creation new and to gather all the faithful under God's Kingdom. Amen.

### **CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

The people may be seated. Leaders may announce special concerns for prayer and invite the people to indicate their needs. (See blue sheet)

### **THE OFFERTORY**

As the offering are gathered there may be an anthem or appropriate music.

- (A) Leader: Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (II Cor. 9:7, NRSV)
- (B) Leader: Let us return to God the offerings of our life and the gifts of the earth. (BCW)
- (C) Leader: Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God. (Hebrews 13:16, NRSV)

#### **CANTICLE**

All who are able may rise as the offering is brought to the chancel and sing a Canticle, after which this prayer be offered in Unison.

- (A) All: RECEIVE, O LORD, WE PRAY YOU, THESE OUR OFFERINGS WHICH WE RENDER FOR THE SERVICE OF YOUR CHURCH, AND FOR THE EXTENSION OF YOUR KINGDOM, AND ACCEPT WITH THEM OUR HEARTS AND LIVES, WHICH WE DESIRE TO CONSECRATE TO YOU; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.
- (B) All: YOURS, O LORD, ARE GRANDEUR AND POWER, MAJESTY, SPLENDOR, AND GLORY.  
ALL IN THE HEAVENS AND ON THE EARTH IS YOUR, AND OF YOUR OWN WE GIVE YOUR. (I Chron. 29:11)
- (C) All: BLESSED ARE YOU, GOD OF ALL CREATION; THROUGH YOUR GOODNESS WE HAVE THESE GIFTS TO SHARE. ACCEPT AND USE OUR OFFERINGS FOR YOUR GLORY AND FOR THE SERVICE OF YOUR KINGDOM.  
BLESSED BE GOD FOREVER.

#### **HYMN OF DEDICATION OR THANKSGIVING**

##### **CHARGE AND BLESSING**

- (A) Pastor: Go out into the world in peace; have courage; hold on to what is good; return no one evil for evil; strengthen the faint-hearted; support the weak, and help the suffering; honor all people; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.  
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
All: ALLELUIA! AMEN.
- (B) Pastor: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord be kind and gracious to you. The Lord took upon you with favor and give you peace.  
All: ALLELUIA! AMEN.
- (C) Pastor: Go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.  
All: ALLELUIA! AMEN.

#### **POSTLUDE**

## ORDER OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD III

### PRELUDE

### INSTRUMENTAL SOUNDS

### CALL TO WORSHIP

- (A) Pastor: O Come, let us worship and bow down: Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.  
People: ENTER INTO HIS GATES WITH THANKSGIVING, AND INTO HIS COURTS WITH PRAISE.
- (B) Pastor: What shall we return to the Lord for all the good things God has done for us?  
People: WE WILL LIFT UP THE CUP OF SALVATION AND CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD. (Psalm 116:12, 13)
- (C) Pastor: Cry out with joy the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness. Come into God's presence with singing!  
People: FOR THE LORD IS A GRACIOUS GOD, WHOSE MERCY IS EVERLASTING; AND WHOSE FAITHFULNESS ENDURES TO ALL GENERATIONS. (Psalm 100:1, 2, 5)

### THE INVOCATION

- (A) Leader or All:

Inspirer and Hearer of prayers, You Shepherd and Guardian of your people, we rejoice in the glory of this new day of rest and worship.

Safely through another week you have brought us on our way. May our prayers rise like incense to you, and find access to the ear of God who never slumbers nor sleeps. Most of all, may our lives so manifest the love that knows no evil that our prayers shall be no mere form of words, but the expression of souls in love with you and intent on helping the world. Grant us a day such as shall send us forth strong for the duties of the coming week: for Jesus' sake. Amen.

- (B) Leader or All:

God of all glory, on this first day you began creation, bringing light out of darkness. On this first day you began your new creation, raising Jesus Christ out of the darkness of death. On this Lord's Day grant that we, the people you create by water and the Spirit, may be joined with all your works in praising you for your great glory. Through Jesus Christ, in union with the Holy Spirit, we praise you now and forever. Amen.

- (C) Leader or All:

O God, you are infinite, eternal and unchangeable, glorious in holiness, full of love and compassion, abundant in grace and truth. Your works everywhere praise you, and your glory is revealed in Jesus Christ our Savior. Therefore we praise you, blessed and holy Trinity, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

### HYMN OF PRAISE

### CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

### PASTORAL PRAYER OR THE CHURCH AT PRAYER READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Old Testament  
New Testament

### CHORAL SUPPLICATION

### CHORAL PROCLAMATION OR HYMN SERMON

### OFFERTORY

Offertory Sentence:

- (A) Leader: "He that finds his life shall lose it; and he that loses his life shall find it."  
(B) Leader: Freely you have received, freely give. (Matt. 10:8b)  
(C) Leader: Give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. (2 Cor. 9:7)

#### **THE DOXOLOGY**

As the offerings are brought forward, the People rise to sing the Doxology or some other canticle.

#### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

All: HUMBLY DO WE LAY OUR GIFTS BEFORE YOU, O GOD, WHO HAS GIVEN TO US THE PRICELESS GIFT OF YOUR SON, JESUS CHRIST. MAY THESE OFFERINGS BE ACCOMPANIED BY THE CONSECRATION OF OUR LIVES. AMEN.

#### **HYMN OF COMMITMENT**

#### **BENEDICTION THREE-FOLD AMEN**

#### **RECESSIONAL**

### **ORDER OF THE LITURGY OF THE WORD IV**

#### **ORGAN PRELUDE**

#### **PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Pastor: The Lord is in the holy temple: Let all the earth keep silence before God.  
People: SURELY, THE LORD IS IN THIS PLACE.  
Pastor: This is none other than the house of God, and this the gate of heaven.

#### **INVOCATION** *(In Unison)*

O LORD, OUR GOD, GREAT, ETERNAL, WONDERFUL IN GLORY, WHO KEEPS COVENANT AND PROMISE FOR THOSE THAT LOVE YOU WITH THEIR WHOLE HEART, WHO ARE THE LIFE OF ALL, THE HELP OF THOSE THAT FEEL YOU, THE HOPE OF THOSE WHO CRY TO YOU; CLEANSE US FROM OUR SINS, AND FROM EVERY THOUGHT DISPLEASING TO YOUR GOODNESS, THAT WITH PURE HEART AND A CLEAN MIND, WITH PERFECT LOVE AND CALM HOPE, WE MAY VENTURE CONFIDENTLY AND FEARLESSLY TO PRAY TO YOU THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, AMEN. *(4th Century Prayer; Coptic Liturgy of St. Basil),*

#### **THE LORD'S PRAYER IN UNISON**

#### **LITANY OF PRAISE**

Pastor: O Lord, open our lips.  
People: AND OUR MOUTH SHALL SHOW FORTH YOUR PRAISE.  
Pastor: Praise the Lord.  
People: THE LORD'S NAME BE PRAISED.

#### **GLORIA PATRI**

#### **RESPONSIVE READING** *(People may be seated)*

Pastor: As the hart pants after the water brooks,  
People: SO PANTS MY SOUL MIER YOU, O GOD.  
Pastor: My soul thirsts for God, for the living God:  
People: WHEN SHALL I COME AND APPEAR BEFORE GOD? Pastor: My tears have been my meat day and night.  
People: WHILE THEY CONSTANTLY SAY UNTO ME, WHERE IS YOUR GOD?



Pastor: Why are you cast down, O my soul?  
 People: AND WHY ARE YOU DISQUIETED WITHIN ME?  
 Pastor: Hope in God:  
 People: FOR I SHALL YET PRAISE GOD FOR THE HELP OF THE LORD'S COUNTENANCE.  
 Pastor: Deep calls unto deep at the noise of Your waterspouts:  
 People: ALL YOUR WAVES AND YOUR BELLOWS ARE GONE OVER ME.  
 Pastor: Yet the Lord will command God's loving-kindness in the daytime.  
 People: AND IN THE NIGHT THE LORD'S SONG SHALL BE WITH ME, AND MY PRAYER TO THE GOD OF MY LIFE.  
 Pastor: Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation:  
 People: O DELIVER ME FROM THE DECEITFUL AND UNJUST PEOPLE.  
 Pastor: O send out Your light and Your truth: let them lead me:  
 People: LET THEM BRING ME TO YOUR HOLY HILL, AND TO YOUR TABERNACLES.  
 Pastor: Then will I go to the altar of God, to God, my exceeding joy.  
 People: YEA, UPON THE HARP WILL I PRAISE YOU, O GOD, MY GOD.  
 Pastor: Why are you cast down, O my soul?  
 People: AND WHY ARE YOU DISQUIETED WITHIN ME?  
 Pastor: Hope in God:  
 People: FOR I SHALL YET PRAISE GOD, WHO IS THE HEALTH OF MY COUNTENANCE AND MY GOD.

#### **HYMN OF PREPARATION THE SCRIPTURE LESSON**

Old Testament Lesson  
 New Testament Lesson

#### **THE PASTORAL PRAYER**

Choral Response

#### **THE ANTHEM**

#### **THE SERMON**

#### **THE OFFERING**

"Freely you have received, freely give. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Matt. 10:8, Acts 20:35)

#### **THE DOXOLOGY AND PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

#### **HYMN OF CONSECRATION THE BENEDICTION**

Response: Sung Amen (*Choir and People*)

#### **ORGAN POSTLUDE**

### **THE LORD'S DAY SERVICE WITH THE LORD'S SUPPER**

The celebration of the Lord's Supper or Eucharist, a practice based largely on the last meal which Jesus ate with his disciples prior to his crucifixion, is the only uniquely Christian aspect of Christian worship. Whether the last Supper that Jesus ate with his disciples was or was not a Passover meal, he followed the usual customs of Jewish piety as he did at other meals with his disciples; hence, "thanksgiving" and "blessing" are prominent in it. But Jesus put new meaning into the old familiar usages: the bread and the cup were henceforward to be the pledge of his real presence, until the perfection of the fellowship in the Heavenly Feast. As the Jews at the Passover meal recalled the mighty act of God in delivering them from slavery in Egypt and gave thanks to him, so Christians, remembering their redemption as a present reality, also give thanks.

The primary sources for the Lord's Supper (I Corinthians 11:23ff, Mark 14:22ff, Matthew 26:26ff, Luke 22:15-17) include the following acts Jesus *took* bread and cup of wine, he *gave thanks* (or *blessed*), he *broke* the bread and then *gave* (or distributed) it to his disciples. One way of understanding the significance of this sacrament is to focus on the action words used in connection with it, more than on the elements, the role of which was to recall the sacrificial death of Christ as *event*.

Jesus first *took* the bread and wine from the offerings of the people. As was customary, this was an act in which everyone shared and thus was established the *Offertory*. The ordinary things of life such as food and drink are shared and are used by the Lord. The second action is the *thanksgiving* in which these gifts of God are acknowledged and offered back to God for use for divine purpose. Thus, in the process, the ordinary things of life are made sacred. In many traditions, this thanksgiving is called the *Prayer of Consecration*. Then follows the breaking of the bread and the pouring of the cup, which underlines a fact of human life — that only as they are used or do they increase in value. The loaf of bread has to be broken in order to be eaten. Finally, climaxing the taking, blessing and breaking is the act of *giving*. Giving or sharing is the highest expression of a person's new life and vitality and hence fills one with joy.

Throughout the centuries and all over the world, there have been at least five major accepted meanings of the Lord's Supper for Christians: first, it is a *Fellowship Meal* in which Christians, partaking of the Supper together with Christians everywhere else, reenact their unity through the sacrament with one another as well as with their Lord. In I Corinthians 10:17, the one bread or loaf of which all partake is a symbol of *unity* of the Church. Second, it is a *Memorial Feast* in remembrance of Jesus Christ and his passion, death, and resurrection, both as a historical fact and as a symbolic act of redemption. The Eucharist proclaims the Cross, the institution of the new covenant in the blood, and is the pledge of the people's share in its benefits. Third, it is also a *manifestation of the Coming Kingdom* for, as Christians celebrate the Lord's Supper with its accompaniments of joy, peace, love and genuine concern for one another, they show forth Christ's coming again. Furthermore, the piece of bread and the cup of wine are the same for all — no more and no less. In the coming Kingdom all share equally. It is a foretaste of a final reunion with Christ in the Kingdom, as well as an expression and the promise of fellowship between Christians. (In the second and third meanings are embodied both a looking back and a looking forward in Christian hope.) Fourth, it is a *Eucharistic Offering* or an offering of thanks-giving for what God has done in and through Jesus Christ, a celebration of God's action in people's behalf on the present reality of human redemption. Fifth, it is also a *Sacrifice* of praise and thanksgiving to God, issuing forth in a life of service to others.

All five meanings are equally important and ought to permeate each celebration of the Lord's Supper. These meanings may be made quite explicit in the spoken Word or sermon which ought to accompany each celebration of the Lord's Supper. A sixth meaning has been inferred in Matthew's narration (Matthew 26:17) where he links the Lord's last supper with the Jewish celebration of the Passover meal. Jesus said he did not come to abolish the rite of the passover, but to give it new meaning. Since Passover is a Jewish celebration of their liberation from Egyptian slavery, the Lord's Supper ought also to be a sign and a dedication to the liberation of all who suffer from all forms of bondage.

Christians today need to recapture the mood of joy and celebration in the Lord's Supper. The New Testament teaches that the gift of the Lord's Supper is the real presence of the risen Lord. In the early Church, the remembrance of Christ's death also brought rejoicing in his living, risen presence at the breaking of the bread. This becomes especially meaningful when the call to setting free of all in bondage becomes a goal for those who partake. The joy of knowing the presence of Christ at the Eucharist was a foretaste of the final liberation and reunion in the Kingdom of God.

With the emphasis on joy, the celebration of Lord's Supper may then be "freed" to incorporate more contemporary modes. For instance, there are many ways by which the bread and the wine may be offered in the offertory, in much the same way that there are many ways of setting the table. Sometimes, the elements are brought in before the congregation gathers and then "uncovered with splendor" at the appointed time before the congregation. At other times, the whole act of preparing the table may be shown and even participated in by the people as they come and bring their offerings of bread, wine, and other gifts. Then there are a number of ways by which the congregation may partake of the elements. Some come and kneel at the rail and are served. Some sit around the communion table and are likewise served, or they may serve each other. Some stand in line and

receive the elements standing. Still others sit in the pews and wait to be served by church elders, while in some instances a single loaf of bread and a single cup or bottle of wine are passed around and each participant either helps himself/herself or feeds his/her neighbor. And so on.

The Lord's Supper indeed opens up many possibilities for contemporizing as well as "indigenizing." In fact, it is through the celebration of the Eucharist or the Lord's Supper that many different denominations are being brought together. The Holy Communion has also been called a *sacrament of unity*. For this reason, there is included here the order of Lord's Supper as celebrated in ecumenical gatherings including the World Council of Churches. It is hoped that it will serve as a pattern for ecumenical Communion services.

## **ORDER OF THE WORD AND EUCHARIST I**

**PREPARATION OR PREPARATORY MUSIC**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

**HYMN OF PRAISE OR ADORATION**

**INVOCATION**

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION AND ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

**SHARING OF CONCERNS/INTERCESSION**

**PASTORAL PRAYER**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**ANTHEM/CHORAL PROCLAMATION**

**SCRIPTURE LESSON**

**MEDITATION/SERMON**

**OFFERTORY** (*with Elements of Communion*)

**PRAYER OF THANKS FOR THE OFFERING**

**HYMN OF PROCLAMATION**

**INVITATION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Hear what comfortable words our Lord Christ has spoken unto us: "Come unto me all who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

*Or let the Minister say*

Dearly beloved, as we draw near to the Lord's Supper to celebrate the Holy Communion of the body and blood of Christ, we are grateful to remember that our Lord instituted this Sacrament to be observed in church to the end of the world: for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of himself in his death, the sealing of all benefits thereof to true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe to him; and to be a bond and pledge of their union with Him and with each other as members of His mystical body.

Let us consider earnestly our great need of having our comfort and strength so renewed in this our earthly pilgrimage and warfare and especially how necessary it is that we come unto the Lord's table with knowledge, Faith, repentance, love, and with hearts hungering and thirsting after Christ. Not unto those who live willing in transgression and offenses, holding fellowship with hatred, malice, or impurity nor to those who cherish pride and self-righteousness in their hearts, trusting secretly in their own works and merits, are these benefits of Christ offered. But all that are truly sorry for their sins and would be delivered from the burden of them, all

that humbly put their trust in Christ, and desire his grace that they may lead a holy life, are invited and encouraged in Jesus' Name to come to this Sacrament. Let us therefore so come that we may find refreshing and rest to our souls.

### **COMMUNION HYMN**

During the hymn, the cloth covering the elements should be carefully removed by the Elders.

### **WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

*By the Pastor, standing, before the Table.*

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until the Lord comes.

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: WE LIFT THEM TO THE LORD.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.

Pastor: Holy God, with one voice we offer You our thankful praise. We rejoice that you are God, maker of heaven and earth and of the covenant of love which binds us to you and to one another. With the church of all times and places we lift our voices in thanksgiving:

Sanctus: HOLY, HOLY, HOLY GOD,  
GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT!  
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY.  
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.

### **THE GIVING OF THE BREAD**

By the Pastor to the elders or other assistants to distribute to the people, the Pastor saying as he/she does so:

*Jesus said, "This is my body which is broken for you."*

*At times, the Pastor to be served first. This symbolizes his/her exemplary role in the church. After the people have been served, the Pastor will serve the elders. But let none eat of the bread until the Pastor shall indicate by pronouncing one of the following two paragraphs.*

*Let us eat of this bread in remembrance of Christ; and may the life which was in him be in us also.*

*Take and eat this bread in remembrance of Christ who said, "This is my body, which is broken for you: this do, in remembrance of me."*

### **SILENT PRAYER**

### **THE GIVING OF THE CUP**

Let the wine be distributed after the same manner as the bread, the Pastor repeating as he gives the cups to the Elders,

*Jesus said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood."*

Let no one drink the cup until the Pastor shall say,

*Let us drink of this cup in remembrance of Christ's blood that is shed for our sins.*

*Take this cup, drink it, in remembrance of Christ who said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; this do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."*

#### **PRAYER OF GRATITUDE THE HOPE**

*Then the Pastor shall say:*

I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, said the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow them. Rev. 14:13.

#### **HYMN**

#### **BENEDICTION**

### **LITURGY OF THE WORD AND EUCHARIST II**

#### **CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH**

*Leaders and people may announce information concerning the program, ministries, and people of the church here or at the offertory*

#### **PRELUDE**

Music may be played as the congregation gathers.

#### **HYMN OF ADORATION**

*According to local custom, the hymn may follow the prelude or the greeting.*

#### **GREETING**

*A leader offers one of these or another greeting informed by scripture.*

- (A) Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.
- (B) Leader: Dear friends, let us love one another, because love comes from God. Whoever loves is a child of God and knows God.  
People: WHOEVER DOES NOT LOVE DOES NOT KNOW GOD, FOR GOD IS LOVE.
- (C) Leader: With what shall we come before the Holy One, and bow ourselves before God on high?  
People: SHALL WE COME BEFORE GOD WITH BURN OFFERINGS, WITH CALVES A YEAR OLD?  
Leader: God has showed you, O people, what is good; and what does the Holy One require of you?  
People: TO DO JUSTICE, AND TO LOVE KINDNESS, AND TO WALK HUMBLY WITH GOD.

#### **INVOCATION**

All who are able may stand.

- (A) Leader: Christ with us.  
People: CHRIST IS IN OUR MIDST  
Leader: Let us pray.
- (B) Leader: God be with you.  
People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.  
Leader: Let us pray.

One of these prayers or one in a leader's own words may be offered, asking for the congregation to be made responsive to the presence of God.

- (A) All: ETERNAL GOD, COMPANION OF ALL WHO SEEK YOU, AND SEEKER OF ALL WHO TURN AWAY FROM YOU, DRAW NEAR TO US THAT WE MAY DRAW NEAR TO YOU, AND GRANT US THE GRACE TO LOVE AND TO SERVE YOU THAT WE MAY FIND IN YOUR WILL OUR TRUE FREEDOM; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, THE WAY THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE. AMEN.
- (B) All: GRACIOUS GOD, GENTLE IN YOUR POWER AND STRONG IN YOUR TENDERNESS, YOU BROUGHT US FORTH FROM THE WOMB OF YOUR BEING AND BREATHED INTO US THE BREATH OF LIFE. WE KNOW THAT WE DO NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT COMES FROM YOU. FEED OUR DEEP HUNGERS WITH THE LIVING BREAD THAT YOU GIVE US IN JESUS CHRIST. MAY JESUS' PROMISE, "WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED IN MY NAME, THERE I AM IN THE MIDST OF THEM." BE FULFILLED IN US. MAKE US A JOYFUL COMPANY OF YOUR PEOPLE SO THAT WITH THE FAITHFUL IN EVERY PLACE AND TIME WE MAY PRAISE AND HONOR YOU, GOD MOST HIGH. AMEN.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD AND EUCHARIST III

### PREPARATION

### PRELUDE

### CHORAL INTROIT

### CALL TO WORSHIP

- Leader: O sing a new song to the Lord: sing to the Lord all the earth. O sing to the Lord, *bless* his name: proclaim his help from day to day.
- People: IT IS THE LORD WHO HAS BROUGHT US TOGETHER TO PRAY, AND PRAISE HIM, AND RECEIVE HIS INSTRUCTION.
- Leader: It is the Lord who has shown a great love for us, and has taught us, through Christ, to call "Father".
- All: GIVE THE LORD GLORY AND POWER GIVE THE LORD THE GLORY OF HIS NAME.

### INVOCATION *(Leader)*

O God, you can do for us exceeding abundantly, above all that we ask or think, come to us now. Come to us and give us strength and peace and joy. Calm our minds. Refresh our spirits. Give us a new name, and a new song, and the power to serve you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### AN ACT OF PRAISE

### INVITATION AND CALL TO PENITENCE

### GENERAL CONFESSION *(All)*

OUR LOVING GOD, HEAR OUR CONFESSION: LIFE IS FULL OF THINGS BUT STILL WE ARE EMPTY. WE LIVE IN AN ENLIGHTENED AGE BUT STILL WE ARE CONFUSED. LIFE OUGHT TO BE JOY BUT INSTEAD WE ARE RESTLESS AND DISSATISFIED. FORGIVE US FOR THE WRONG KIND OF HUNGER THAT SITS BEFORE A TABLE FULL OF LUXURIES AND SEEKS FOR MORE THINGS, WHILE ALL AROUND US OTHERS CRY FOR CRUMBS. FORGIVE US FOR SUPPOSING THAT MAN'S LIFE CONSISTS OF THE ABUNDANCE OF WHAT HE POSSESSES. O LORD, OUR NEED IS TO FORGET OURSELVES IN CONCERN FOR OTHERS' NEEDS. AMEN.

### WORDS OF ASSURANCE

- Leader: The Lord knows that we are men and women in need of forgiveness. He is merciful and sets us free.
- People: SETS US FREE TO BEGIN AGAIN, TO SING A NEW SONG. THE LORD'S WORE BE PRAISED.

### ANTHEM

### PASTORAL PRAYER — THE LORD'S PRAYER — CHORAL RESPONSE

## CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH LIFE

### READING OF THE SCRIPTURE

### SERMON

## CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

### THE OFFERTORY

Minister: Beloved in Christ, the Gospels tell us that on the first day of the week, the same day on which our Lord rose from the dead, he appeared to the disciples in the place where they were gathered, and was made known to them in the breaking of bread. Come then to the joyful feast of the Lord. Let us prepare this table with offerings of our life and labor.

#### Offertory Music

#### Doxology

During the Doxology the bread and the wine will be brought to the Table, together with the morning offerings.

#### Prayer of Dedication

### THE ACT OF CONSECRATION OF ELEMENTS

Minister: With the whole company of saints in heaven and on earth, we worship and glorify you, most holy, and we declare with joy.

Unison: HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD GOD OF HOSTS,  
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY,  
GLORY BE TO YOU, O LORD, MOST HIGH.

*Ministers proceed to consecrate the elements*

Unison: HIS DEATH, O GOD, WE PROCLAIM,  
HIS RESURRECTION WE DECLARE,  
HIS COMING WE AWAIT,  
GLORY BE TO YOU, O LORD.

### HYMN OF PREPARATION

### SERVING OF THE BREAD AND WINE

Minister (1): The bread which we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?

People: BECAUSE THERE IS ONE BREAD, WE WHO ARE MANY ARE ONE BODY, FOR WE ALL PARTAKE OF ONE BREAD.

Minister (2): The wine which we drink, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ?

People: THE CUP WHICH WE BLESS IS THE COMMUNION IN THE BLOOD OF CHRIST.

Ministers: And now, ministering in Christ's name, we give you this bread and this cup.

Bread and wine are served. This is an opportune time for individual meditation and prayer.

### AN ACT OF DEDICATION

#### PRAYER OF DEDICATION (*Unison*)

HOLY AND EVERLIVING GOD, WE GIVE YOU THANKS FOR FEEDING US WITH THE SPIRITUAL FOOD OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST. NOW, STRENGTHEN, O LORD, THE HANDS WHICH HAVE BEEN HELD OUT TO RECEIVE YOUR HOLY THINGS, THAT THEY MAY EVER SERVE YOU. GRANT THAT THE TONGUES WHICH HAVE UTTERED YOUR NAME MAY EVER SPEAK THE TRUTH; THAT THE EYES WHICH HAVE SEEN YOUR GREAT LOVE MAY ALSO BEHOLD OUR BROTHERS IN LOVE; THAT THE FEET WHICH HAVE TROD

YOUR HOUSE MAY WALK WHEREVER THE NEEDS ARE; AND THAT WE MAY BE RESTORED TO A NEW LIFE OF SERVICE, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

## **BENEDICTION**

Choral Response

## **MOMENT OF CONTEMPLATION FOR SERVICE AND ACTION**

## **POSTLUDE**

# **LITURGY OF THE WORD AND EUCHARIST IV**

## **PRELUDE**

This service may begin with music as the congregation gathers. Sounds from a native instrument will indicate the start of the greeting and sentences of adoration or the hymn which follows, according to local custom.

## **GREETING**

These or another greeting from Scripture.

- (A) Leader: In the name of the triune God: the Creator, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit.  
All: AMEN
- (B) Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.
- (C) Leader: Alleluia! Christ is risen.  
People: CHRIST IS RISEN INDEED. ALLELUIA!

## **SENTENCES OF ADORATION**

All who are able may stand as one or more of the following sentences or others appropriate for the day or season are said:

- (A) Leader: Our help is in the name of the Holy One, who made heaven and earth.  
(B) Leader: Christ, our paschal lamb, has been offered for us. Let us, therefore, celebrate the festival.  
(C) Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.  
(D) Leader: God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.  
(E) Leader: God has brought the people of the covenant from the land of bondage into freedom.  
("F") Leader: Jesus Came to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to liberate those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the year of God's favor.

## **HYMN OF ADORATION**

All who are able may stand. This may be a processional hymn.

## **CONFESSION OF SIN**

The people may be seated. A leader may offer one of these prayers or in his or her own words.

- (A) Leader: We are called to examine our faithfulness to God's covenant with us.
- (B) Leader: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. God in whose presence we gather, promises us grace and pardon when we acknowledge our weakness and shame. Let us confess our sin to almighty God.
- All: ETERNAL GOD, WHOSE WORD IS A LAMP FOR OUR FEET AND A LIGHT FOR OUR PATH, WE RECOGNIZE AND CONFESS THAT WE HAVE FAILED TO RESPOND FULLY TO YOUR GRACIOUS



PRESENCE IN OUR LIVES. THROUGH JESUS CHRIST YOU HAVE OFFERED US NEW LIFE, FULFILLMENT, AND THE FREEDOM TO SERVE YOU. WE CONFESS THAT WE ARE CAPTIVE TO SIN, THAT OUR SIN BINDS US WITH FALSE PRIDE, AND THAT THE WRONG WE DO IS MADE WORSE BY THE GOOD WE LEAVE UNDONE. RECONCILE US TO YOU AND TO ALL PEOPLE. GOD OF MERCY, FORGIVE ALL OUR SINS AND STRENGTHEN US ANEW FOR LIFE AS YOU INTEND IT; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR. AMEN.

People: BUT IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, GOD WHO IS FAITHFUL AND JUST, WILL FORGIVE OUR SINS AND CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

Leader: Let us confess our sins before God and one another.

All: MOST MERCIFUL GOD, WE CONFESS THAT WE ARE IN BOND-AGE OF SIN AND CANNOT FREE OURSELVES. WE HAVE SINNED AGAINST YOU IN THOUGHT, WORD AND DEED, BY WHAT WE HAVE DONE AND BY WHAT WE HAVE LEFT UNDONE. WE HAVE NOT LOVED YOU WITH OUR WHOLE HEART. WE HAVE NOT LOVED OUR NEIGHBORS AS OURSELVES. FOR THE SAKE OF JESUS CHRIST, HAVE MERCY ON US SO THAT WE MAY DELIGHT IN YOUR WILL AND FOLLOW IN YOUR WAYS, TO THE GLORY OF YOUR NAME. AMEN.

### **SILENCE**

Silence may be observed for reflection and prayer. PRAYER FOR MERCY

The Kyrie, Trisagion, or other words may be said or sung.

(A) Leader: God hears the confession of our hearts and lips. Through Jesus Christ we are forgiven all our sins, and by the Holy Spirit we are empowered for new life.

All: WE BELIEVE THE GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.

(B) Leader: Anyone in Christ becomes a new person altogether; the past is finished and gone, everything has become fresh and new. Friends, believe the good news of the gospel:

All: IN JESUS CHRIST, WE ARE FORGIVEN.

### **PASSING THE PEACE**

As a sign of their reconciliation with God and each other, all may greet others with an embrace or a handshake, accompanied by such words as: "The peace of God be with you," and the response: "And also with you." All who are able may use for the passing of the peace. Leaders of the service may move among the congregation to share the signs of peace.

### **ACT OF PRAISE**

All who are able may stand for a call to praise and a hymn, psalm or gloria.

Leader: Let us sing praise to God.

All: WE CONTINUALLY PRAISE GOD'S HOLY NAME.

(A) *A hymn, psalm, or gloria such as the following may be read or sung.*

All: GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, AND PEACE TO GOD'S PEOPLE ON EARTH.

HOLY ONE, HEAVENLY GOD, SOVEREIGN GOD AND CREATOR, WE WORSHIP YOU, WE GIVE YOU THANKS, WE PRAISE YOU FOR YOUR GLORY.

LORD JESUS CHRIST, GOD'S ONLY BEGOTTEN ONE, LORD GOD, LAMB OF GOD, YOU TAKE AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD: HAVE MERCY ON US; YOU ARE SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF MAJESTY: RECEIVE OUR PRAYER.

FOR YOU ALONE ARE THE MESSIAH, YOU ALONE ARE THE LORD, YOU ALONE ARE THE MOST HIGH, JESUS CHRIST, WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, IN THE GLORY OF THE TRIUNE GOD. AMEN.

(B)        *This gloria may be said or sung.*

All:        GLORY TO GOD THE CREATOR, AND TO THE CHRIST, AND TO THE HOLY SPIRIT: AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING, IS NOW, AND WILL BE FOR EVER. AMEN.

## READING OF SCRIPTURE

The people may be seated as the Scripture lessons are introduced. Care should be given to maintain a balance in readings from the Old Testament, the Epistles, and the Gospels.

A collect for illumination, a seasonal collect, or an extemporaneous prayer asking for attentive hearts may precede the first reading. A brief introduction to the theme of each lesson may be offered. In order to distinguish the lesson from the commentary, the reader may announce the lesson as indicated.

## OLD TESTAMENT LESSON

Reader (*before the lesson*): Listen for the word of God in \_\_\_\_\_.

Reader (*following the lesson*): Here ends the Epistle lesson.

## GOSPEL LESSON

In some local churches, standing, by those who are able to, for the reading of the Gospel is customary as it is a sign of respect for Jesus Christ, who addresses the congregation. Responses before and after this lesson may be said or sung.

Reader (*below the lesson*): Listen to the Gospel of Jesus Christ according to \_\_\_\_\_.

People:     GLORY TO YOU, O CHRIST.

Reader (*following the lesson*): This is the good news.

People:     PRAISE TO YOU, O CHRIST.

## SERMON

## AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

All who are able may stand for a form of the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, a creed, or a church covenant.

## HYMN, ANTHEM, OR OTHER MUSIC

## PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The people may be seated for the prayers. Leaders may announce special concerns for prayers and invite the people to indicate needs or to name causes for thanksgiving. Intercessions may include prayers for:

- The church universal, including ecumenical councils, specific churches in other places, the United Church of Christ in the Philip-pines and its leaders, and this local church.
- The nations and all in authority.
- Justice and Peace in all the world.
- The health of those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit. The needs of families, single people, and the lonely.
- Reconciliation with adversaries.
- The local community and all other communities.
- All who are oppressed or in prison.

A litany of prayers and responses, with silences, may be used; a pastoral prayer may be offered; petitions may be offered by anyone present, ending with a phrase to which all may respond, such as those below. A longer period of silence may precede or follow the prayers.

(A) Leader:    Christ, in your mercy,

People: HEAR OUR PRAYER.

(B) Leader: Holy Spirit, our Comforter,  
People: RECEIVE OUR PRAYER.

### CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH

Leaders and people may announce information concerning the program, ministry, and people of the church.

### OFFERTORY

A leader may introduce the offertory and give an invitation to Holy Communion, using his or her own words or one of the following:

(A) Leader: Through Christ let us continually praise God and share what we have, for such sacrifices are please to God.

People: LET US PREPARE CHRIST'S TABLE WITH THE OFFERINGS OF OUR LIFE AND LABOR.

(B) Leader: Let us present with joy our offerings of commitment and support for the work of Christ's church.

Music maybe offered to God's glory while the tithes and offerings are being received. Silence is also appropriate. The people may express their dedication and thanksgiving to God through music, prayers, dance, and other acts.

The people who are able may stand as representatives bring the gifts to the table. The communion elements may be brought to the table with the other gifts.

A doxology, such as the following to the tune "Old Hundredth" or some contemporary melody settings may be sung.

All: PRAISE GOD FROM WHOM ALL BLESSING FLOW; PRAISE CHRIST THE WORD IN FLESH BORN LOW;  
PRAISE HOLY SPIRIT EVERMORE; ONE GOD, TRIUNE, WHOM WE ADORE. AMEN.

A prayer of dedication may be said.

If there is to be no celebration of Holy Communion, the service may be concluded with the Prayer of our Savior, a hymn, a benediction, and a postlude.

### INVITATION

While all who are able to stand, a leader may use these or other words informed by Scripture. The people respond.

Leader: Beloved in Christ, the Gospel tells us that on the first day of the week Jesus Christ was raised from death, appeared to Mary Magdalene, on that same day sat at the table with the disciples, and was made known to them in the breaking of the bread.

All: THIS IS THE JOYFUL FEAST OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD. MEN AND WOMEN, YOUTH AND CHILDREN, COME FROM THE EAST AND THE WEST, FROM THE NORTH AND THE SOUTH, AND GATHER ABOUT CHRIST'S TABLE.

Leader: This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ and to share in the community of God's people.

### COMMUNION PRAYER

Pastor: God be with you.

People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: WE LIFT THEM TO GOD.

Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Most High.

People: IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE GOD THANKS AND PRAISE.

The pastor leads in thankful 'recalling of God's great acts of salvation using one of these:

(A) Pastor: We give you thanks, God of majesty and mercy, for calling forth the creation and raising us from dust by the breath of your being.

We bless you for the beauty and bounty of the earth and for the vision of the day when sharing by all will mean scarcity for none.

We remember the covenant you made with your people Israel, and we give you thanks for all our ancestors in faith. We rejoice that you call us to reconciliation with you and to all people everywhere and that you remain faithful to your covenant even when we are faithless.

We rejoice that you call the entire human family to this table of sacrifice and victory. We come in remembrance and celebration of the gift of Jesus Christ, whom you sent, in the fullness of time, to be the good news, born of Mary, our sister in faith. Christ lived among us to reveal the mystery of your Word, to suffer and die on the cross for us, to be raised from death on the third day, and then to live in gloria.

*A seasonal preface may be said here:*

We bless you, gracious God, for the presence of your Holy Spirit in the church you have gathered. With your sons and daughters of faith in all places and times, we praise you with joy.

or

(B) Pastor: We give you thanks, Holy One, almighty and eternal God, always and everywhere, through Jesus Christ, the only one begotten by you before all time, by whom you made the world and all things.

We bless you for your continual love and care for every creature. We praise you for forming us in your image and for calling us to be your people.

Although we rebelled against your love, you did not abandon us instead you sent us prophets and teachers to lead us into the way of salvation.

Above all, we give you thanks for the gift of Jesus, our only savior, who is the way, the truth, and the life.

In the fullness of time you came to us and received our nature in the person of Jesus, who, in obedience to you, by suffering on the cross, and being raised from the dead, delivered us from the way of sin and death.

We praise you that Jesus now reigns with you in glory and every lives to pray for us.

We thank you for the Holy Spirit who leads us into truth, depends us in adversity, and gathers us from every people to unite us in one holy church.

Therefore, with the entire company of saints in heaven and on earth, we worship and glorify you, God Most Holy.

*All may sing or say the following.*

All: HOLY, HOLY, HOLY GOD OF LOVE AND MAJESTY, THE WHOLE UNIVERSE SPEAKS OF YOUR GLORY, O GOD MOST HIGH.

BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF OUR GOD! HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST!

The people may be seated as option A or B of the prayer continues. As the following words are spoken, the pastor may indicate the communion elements.

(A) Pastor: We remember that on the night of betrayal and desertion, on the eve of death, Jesus gathered the disciples for the feast of Passover.

Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying: "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

*Therefore we proclaim the mystery of our faith.*

- (B) Pastor: For in the night of betrayal Jesus took bread, and after giving thanks to you, broke the bread, and gave it to the disciples, and said: "Take, eat: This is my body which given for you. Do this is remembrance of me."

In the same way also after supper, Jesus took the cup, and after giving you thanks, give it to them and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you and many, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

*Either of these may be said or sung with option A or option B of the prayer.*

- (A) All: CHRIST'S DEATH, O GOD, WE PROCLAIM. CHRIST'S RES-URRECTION WE DECLARE. CHRIST'S COMING WE AWAIT, GLORY BE TO YOU, O GOD.

- (B) All: CHRIST HAS DIED, CHRIST IS RISEN. CHRIST WILL COME AGAIN.

*Option A or B of the prayer continues*

- Pastor: Eternal God, we unite in the covenant of faith, recalling Christ's suffering and death, rejoicing in Christ's resurrection, and awaiting Christ's return in victory.

We spread your table with these gifts of the earth and of our labor. We present to you our very lives, committed to your service in behalf of all people.

We ask you to send your Holy Spirit on this bread and wine, on our gifts, and on us. Strengthen your universal church that it may be the champion of peace and justice in all the world. Restore the earth with your grace that is able to make all things new.

- All: BE PRESENT WITH US AS WE SHARE THIS MEAL, AND THROUGH-OUT ALL OUR LIVES, THAT WE MAY KNOW YOU AS THE HOLY ONE, WHO WITH CHRIST AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, LIVES FOR-EVER. AMEN.

- (B) Pastor: Holy One, show forth among us the presence of your life-giving Word and Holy Spirit, to sanctify us and your entire church through this holy mysteries. Grant that all who share the communion of the body and blood of our risen Savior may be one in Jesus Christ.

May we remain faithful in love and hope, until perfect feast with our exalted Savior in the eternal joy of your heavenly realm.

- All: GRACIOUS GOD, ACCEPT WITH FAVOR THIS OUR SACRIFICE OF PRAISE, WHICH WE NOW PRESENT WITH THESE HOLY GIFTS. WE OFFER TO YOU OURSELVES, GIVING YOU THANKS FOR THE PERFECT OFFERING OF THE ONLY ONE -BEGO I IEN BY YOU, JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR;

BY WHOM AND WITH WHOM AND IN WHOM, IN THE UNITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, ALL HONOR AND GLORY BE TO YOU, ETERNAL GOD, NOW AND FOREVER. AMEN

If option A or B of the communion prayer has been used, the service continues with the Prayer of our Savior (The Lord's Prayer):

- (C) *The pastor, following this or similar outline, may offer the prayer of great thanksgiving in her or his own words.*

- Give thanks for God's goodness to us shown in the creation of the world and in the events of history.
- Remember people of faith through whom God has spoken to the human family as Witnessed in scripture.
- Give thanks for the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Recall Jesus' words at the institution of the supper in the upper room.

- Remind us that our participation in Holy Communion is a sacrifice of praise which includes the offering of our lives to God.
- Briefly proclaim faith in Christ who has died, is raised, and will return at the close of history.
- Give thanks for the gift of the Holy Spirit whose presence is invoked.

### **PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR (THE LORD'S PRAYER)**

Standing, sitting, or kneeling, all may sing or say the prayer received from Jesus Christ.

Leader: Let us pray as Christ our Savior has taught us.

All: 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. SAVE US FROM THE TIME TRIAL AND DELIVER FROM EVIL. FOR THE KINGDOM, THE POWER AND THE GLORY ARE YOURS NOW AND FOR EVER. AMEN.

### **BREAKING BREAD AND POURING WINE**

The bread is broken and the wine is poured as visible and audible reminders of the sacrificial self-giving of Jesus Christ. These actions call to mind the cost as well as the joy of Christian discipleship.

Pastor *(while taking the bread and breaking it)*: The bread which we break is the communion of the body Christ;

Pastor *(while pouring the wine and raising the cup)*: The cup of blessing which we bless is the communion of the blood of Christ.

### **LAMB OF GOD**

Either version of the ancient Agnus Dei may be said or sung by all.

(A) All: LAMB OF GOD, YOU TAKE AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD: HAVE MERCY ON US.

LAMB OF GOD, YOU TAKE AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD: HAVE MERCY ON US: LAMB OF GOD, YOU TAKE AWAY THE SINS OF THE WORLD: GRANT US PEACE.

(B) All: JESUS, LAMB OF GOD: HAVE MERCY ON US. JESUS, BEARER OF OUR SINS: HAVE MERCY ON US. JESUS, REDEEMER OF THE WORLD: GIVE US YOUR PEACE.

### **SHARING THE ELEMENTS**

In giving the bread and cup, the pastor and those assisting may use their own words or one of the following, and the people respond:

(A) while giving the bread

Pastor: Take and eat, this is the body of Christ, broken for you.

People: AMEN.

While giving the cup

Pastor: Take and drink, this is the cup of the new covenant, poured out for you.

People: AMEN!

while giving the bread

Pastor: The body of Christ, the bread of heaven.

People: AMEN!

while giving the cup

Pastor: The blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.

People: AMEN!

After the distribution of the bread and cup, the element may be covered, according to local custom. Words of dismissal may precede the prayer of thanksgiving if people have moved from their seats to receive communion.

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

All who are able may stand. A leader may give thanks in her or his own words or may use one of the following.

Leader: Let us pray.

(A) All: ALMIGHTY GOD; WE GIVE YOU THANKS FOR THE GIFT OF OUR SAVIOR'S PRESENCE IN THE SIMPLICITY AND SPLENDOR OF THIS HOLY MEAL. UNITE US WITH ALL WHO ARE FED BY CHRIST'S BODY AND BLOOD THAT WE MAY FAITHFULLY PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS OF YOUR LOVE AND THAT YOUR UNIVERSAL CHURCH MAY BE A RAINBOW OF HOPE IN AN UNCERTAIN WORLD; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR REDEEMER. AMEN.

(B) All: BOUNTIFUL GOD, WE GIVE YOU THANKS THAT YOU HAVE REFRESHED US AT YOUR TABLE BY GRANTING US THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST. STRENGTHEN OUR FAITH, INCREASE OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER, AND SEND US FORTH INTO THE WORLD IN COURAGE AND PEACE, REJOICING IN THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

### **HYMN OF PARTING**

All who are able may stand. Depending on local custom, the commissioning and benediction, with or without the Song of Simeon, precede the hymn.

### **SONG OF SIMEON**

All may sing or say the ancient Nunc Dimittis.

All: HOLY ONE, NOW LET YOUR SERVANT GO IN PEACE; YOUR WORD HAS BEEN FULFILLED: MY OWN EYES HAVE SEEN THE SALVATION WHICH YOU HAVE PREPARED IN THE SIGHT OF EVERY PEOPLE; A LIGHT TO REVEAL YOU TO THE NATIONS AND THE GLORY OF YOUR PEOPLE ISRAEL.

### **COMMISSIONING**

All who are able may stand as a leader says these or other words of commissioning.

Leader: Go forth into the world to serve God with gladness; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

### **BENEDICTION**

A leader may offer one of the following or another blessing.

(A) Leader: The blessing of God Almighty: the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier, be with you all.

People: AMEN.

(B) Leader: Now, may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Savior Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you do God's will, working in you that which is pleasing in God's sight; through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. People: AMEN.

### **POSTLUDE**

The congregation may be seated and remain until the postlude is concluded.

# ORDER OF LITURGY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT I

## PRAISE

### PRELUDE (*Silent Meditation*)

Loving God, I trust the faithfulness you have always made known to me. I trust your love in Jesus that can never grow cold. I trust in you. Take my life to be all your own. 1, to myself, no more would live. Come, Lord of all life, for you alone are my God.

### LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

### INTROIT

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: People of God, look around you and see the images of God gathered in this sanctuary today. Look around you and see the signs of an emerging community of faith, service and love!

People: WE AFFIRM TODAY THAT WE ARE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST AND MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH, THE BODY OF CHRIST.

All (*singing*): AS CHRISTIANS, TRUE HEARTS EVERYWHERE THEIR HIGH COMMUNION FIND; FOR SERVICE IS THE GOLDEN CORD CLOSE BINDING HUMANKIND.

Liturgist: People of God, come! Come for this day of renewal and community. Come as you are, followers of the living God; come as you can be, witnesses of the risen Christ; come as you hope to be, vessels of the Holy Spirit.

All (*singing*): SHOUT THE MESSAGE, TELL THE STORY OF OUR GOD'S REVEALING GIFT, CHRIST WELL BLESS AND GIVE US WISDOM, GRANT US GRACE AND POWER SWIFT. WE, THE CHURCH, CHRIST'S EARTHLY BODY, LOVE AND PRAISES NOW WE LIFT!

Liturgist: Let us rejoice and be glad as we worship God!

All: LET US THEREFORE COME TOGETHER TO GOD IN JOY AND THANKSGIVING. LET US OPEN OUR HEARTS TO GOD'S SAVING ACTS, AND WORSHIP THE GOD WHO CREATES US, JESUS WHO LIBERATES US, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO GIVES US STRENGTH TO PERSEVERE.

### HYMN OF PRAISE

### INVOCATION

Liturgist: May God be with us!

People: MAY GOD'S FACE SHINE UPON US.

Liturgist: May God's gracious love be with us.

People: AND ABIDE WITH US TO GIVE US LIFE!

All: HOLY AND FAITHFUL GOD OF ALL: IN THIS MOMENT OF WORSHIP, MAY YOU RENEW OUR FAITH AND DEEPEN OUR LOVE. AS WE SING HYMNS, OFFER PRAYERS, AND FELLOWSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND UNITE TO BRING BEFORE YOU OUR CONCERNS, MAY YOU BE WITH US AND TEACH US TO GIVE THANKS AND TO WALK IN YOUR PATHS OF OBEDIENT SERVICE. WE THANK YOU FOR CONSTANTLY REMINDING US THAT IN TRUSTING YOU; WE SHALL BE SAVED. WE THANK YOU FOR ASSURING US THAT IN QUIETNESS AND CONFIDENCE, WE SHALL DISCOVER YOU TO BE OUR CONSTANT COMPANION AND SOURCE OF STRENGTH. BY THE POWER OF YOUR LIFE-GIVING WORD, RENEW US. BY THE WISDOM OF YOUR COUNSEL, TEACH US. BY YOUR LOVING PRESENCE, SURROUND US WITH LOVE THAT WOULD ENABLE US TO CELEBRATE LIFE IN ITS FULLNESS! WE PRAY IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, OUR REDEEMER AND FRIEND. AMEN

### CONFESSION



## CALL TO CONFESSION

Liturgist: We have been forgiven but the same sins recur. We have resolved to live in newness of life, but the old patterns prove very hard to break!

People: JUST WHEN WE THINK WE ARE DOING VERY WELL, A LOOK AT OURSELVES REVEALS STILL GREATER NEED FOR FORGIVENESS. WE SEEK GOD'S HELP.

All (*singing*): TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY, BE CALM IN YOUR SOUL  
EACH THOUGHT AND EACH MOTIVE BENEATH GOD'S CONTROL,  
IN JOY AND IN SORROW, STILL FOLLOW YOUR LORD, AND, LOOKING TO JESUS,  
STILL TRUST IN HIS WORD. AMEN.

## PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Liturgist: Let us confess our sins to the God who loves us so much.

People: AND OPEN OURSELVES TO GOD'S ABUNDANT MERCIES THAT COULD MAKE US WHOLE.

All: MERCIFUL GOD, WE HAVE KEPT ON JUSTIFYING OURSELVES THROUGH OUR DEEDS. WE  
COMPARE OURSELVES: WITH OBVIOUS SINNERS, AND CONGRATULATE OURSELVES FOR BEING  
GOOD! WE EXAGGERATE OUR OWN FAITHFULNESS AND OVERLOOK THE GOOD THINGS OTHERS  
HAVE DONE. BY WHAT WE DO AND BY WHAT WE NEGLECT, WE FAIL TO LIVE AS YOUR FAITHFUL  
FOLLOWERS. WE PRAY, O MERCIFUL GOD, FOR YOUR PARDON.

All (*singing*): SILENTLY NOW, I WAIT FOR THEE,  
READY, MY GOD, THY WILL TO SEE;  
OPEN MY EYES, ILLUMINE ME,  
SPIRIT DIVINE!. AMEN.

*People in silent confession.*

## FORGIVENESS

### AFFIRMATION OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS

Minister: God's readiness to forgive far exceeds our ability to sin? God's grace in Jesus Christ reaches into all our being and places of existence. Let us accept the good news that in Christ Jesus, God has forgiven all our sins!

People: WITH GRATEFUL HEARTS, WE RECEIVE GOD'S GIFTS OF FORGIVENESS AND NEW LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR!

All (*singing*): O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING,  
OUR GREAT REDEEMERS PRAISE  
THE GLORIES OF OUR GOD AND KING,  
THE TRIUMPHS OF GOD'S GRACE. AMEN.

### PASSING OF THE PEACE

Liturgist: The Spirit descends like a dove, bringing love to unite the world into a just and caring community.

People: THE SPIRIT COMES LIKE BREATH, BRINGING PEACE TO RENEW AND RECONCILE GOD'S PEOPLE.

All: SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD, COME TO US AND TRANSFORM OUR LIVES BY YOUR GIFT OF PEACE.

Liturgist: Let us now share God's peace with one another.

*People share God's peace with one another as organist plays.*

## FELLOWSHIP

### COMMUNITY CONCERNS

## **CALL TO PRAYER**

### **THE CHURCH AT PRAYER**

### **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

### **READING OF THE WORD OF GOD**

Liturgist: Grant us grace, loving God, to receive your truth in faith and love.

People: THAT BY IT WE MAY BE TAUGHT AND GUIDED, UPHELD AND STRENGTHENED, AND PREPARED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK.

*Isaiah 29:15-24 (OT, 770)*

*Math 3: 1-6 (NT, 50)*

Liturgist: This is the word of the Lord.

People: WE FIND NEW LIFE IN GOD'S WORD!

### **ANTHEM**

### **MEDITATION**

### **HOLY COMMUNION**

### **HYMN OF PREPARATION**

*After the song, the communion ushers and celebrating, ministers take their places at the altar.*

### **WORDS OF INVITATION**

Minister: Merciful God, as sisters and brothers in the faith, we recall once again the words and acts of Jesus Christ:

People: AS THEY WERE EATING, JESUS TOOK BREAD, GAVE THANKS TO GOD, BROKE IT, AND GAVE IT TO THE DISCIPLES AND SAID:

Minister: "Take, eat! This is my body that is broken for you. Do this to remember me."

People: JESUS TOOK A CUP, AND AFTER GIVING THANKS, GAVE IT TO THE DISCIPLES AND SAID:

Minister: "Drink of it, all of you. For this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Do this to remember me."

All: CHRIST'S DEATH, O GOD, WE PROCLAIM,  
CHRIST'S RESURRECTION WE DECLARE.  
CHRIST'S COMING WE AWAIT.  
GLORY TO YOU, O GOD, MOST LOVING!

### **CONSECRATION OF THE BREAD AND THE CUP**

Minister: Come, Holy Spirit, come!  
Bless this bread, and bless this fruit of the vine.  
Bless all of us in our eating and drinking at your Table that our eyes may be opened,  
and we may recognize the risen Christ in our midst,  
in each other and in all for whom Christ died.

All (*singing*): SANCTUS

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Minister: The sacrament of the Holy Communion is the joyful feast of the people of God.

People: MEN AND WOMEN, YOUTH AND CHILDREN, COME FROM THE EAST AND THE WEST, FROM NORTH AND SOUTH, AND GATHER ABOUT CHRIST'S TABLE.

Minister: This table is for all Christians who wish to know the presence of Christ, and to share in the community of God's people. With Bread and Cup we are made one, One Body head and whole.  
AMEN.

### THE HOLY COMMUNION

*The community will receive the communion at the same time.*

Minister: Through the broken bread we participate in the Body of Christ.

*(All take bread)*

Through the cup of blessing we participate in the new life Christ gives.

*(All have the cup)*

### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Ministers: We give thanks, Holy God, for at your Table you have granted us the presence of Jesus Christ. Strengthen our faith, increase our love for one another, and send us forth into the world in courage and peace, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

### DEDICATION

### CALL TO OFFERING

Liturgist: Our gifts do not only meet the needs of God's people, but also produce an outpouring of grateful thanks to God.

People: IT IS A JOYFUL ACT ALWAYS TO OFFER OURSELVES TO THE LORD ALMIGHTY, CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

All: WE NOW PRAISE GOD AND WITH GLADNESS PRESENT OUR OFFERINGS OF LIFE AND THE FRUITS OF OUR LABOR.

### OFFERING OF LIFE AND LABOR

Offertory

### SONG OF THANKSGIVING

### OFFERTORY PRAYER

Liturgist: Let us offer our gifts for God's blessing.

People: AND OURSELVES TO BE INSTRUMENTS OF GOD'S LOVE!

Liturgist: Loving God, may you consecrate these gifts

Pulpit Side: For the preaching of the good news of your love;

Choir: For the teaching of Jesus way of life;

Lectern Side: For the healing of broken lives and the caring of the helpless;

All: AND FOR LEADING PERSONS TO EXPERIENCE YOUR LOVE THROUGH THE WITNESS OF YOUR CHURCH. IN JESUS' NAME. AMEN.

### PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Congregational Response

### THE BLESSING

Minister: May the Lord guide our hearts in the way of faith and fill us with the gifts of the Spirit.

People: MAY GOD GIVE US STRENGTH TO BE BEARERS OF THE MORE ABUNDANT LIFE IN CHRIST.

All: MAY OUR HEARTS BE OPEN TO GOD'S CALL TO LOVE OTHERS AS WE LOVE OURSELVES.

Men: May the love of Christ equip us to serve.

Women: May the joy of the Spirit lead us to celebrate life with others

Minister: May the power of God come upon us.

May the wisdom Of Jesus Christ encourage us,

May the witness of the Holy Spirit accompany us,  
So that we may continue sharing the Good News that we are all one in Christ.  
All: SO BE IT! AMEN!

#### **CHORAL RESPONSE**

#### **POSTLUDE** (*silent meditation*)

"Jesus Christ endured the suffering that should have been ours, the pain that we should have borne... Because of our sins he was wounded, beaten because of the evil we did. We are healed by the punishment he suffered, made whole by the blows he received:" (Isaiah 53:4-5)

Lord God, you gave yourself for me. Make me offer myself to serve your cause!

## **OCCASIONAL RITES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP**

### **A. CREATION OR NEW LIFE RITES SERVICES OF BAPTISM**

#### **LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT OF INFANT BAPTISM I**

At the designated place in the order of worship, the minister shall stand in front of the congregation with a church elder by his/her side and shall invite the parents and sponsors to bring forward the child or children to be baptized. The parents and sponsors may form a diagonal line so they shall be partly facing the congregation or the pastor facing the chancel and the parents and sponsors facing the congregation.

**ADDRESS** (*by the Minister, facing the congregation*)

My dear brothers and sisters, we are about to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. Let us hear the words of Jesus Christ once again when he said, "Go forth and make all nations my disciples; baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you. And be assured, I am with you always, to the end of time.

(*To the Parents*)

You have brought your child here desiring for him/her Christian baptism. Let us be reminded that there are essentially two basic meanings behind the baptism of infants. In the first place, by this act, we acknowledge once again that God is the Source of all our love. Thus as parents we acknowledge God's loving work of creation and offer the gratitude of our hearts for the happiness and hope which has come into our lives by the presence of a

child. Furthermore, we acknowledge that God's loving initiative precedes our awareness of it. Thus, long before we first became aware of God's loving concern for our lives, that love has always been undergirding all that we are and all that we do. In baptizing this child, then, we are declaring publicly that even though he/she may not be consciously aware of God's love, God's loving care has been, and is surrounding his/her growing life. In the second place, by this act we bring this child into a new environment, the environment of a loving, sharing community whose Lord is Christ. The church is this community for we are those who have experienced the love shown to us through Christ. In baptizing this infant, we as members of the house-hold of God, pledge to God and declare that we will surround this child with that love we ourselves have known through Christ.

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for such belongs the reign of God. Truly, I say to you, whosoever does not receive the Reign of God like a child shall not enter it." And Jesus took them up in his arms and blessed them.

### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Minister: Let us unite our hearts and voices in the affirmation of our common faith.

*The UCCP Statement of Faith may be said together here.*

### **VOWS**

*(Of the Parents)*

Minister: In bringing this child now to be baptized, do you, confess your faith in Jesus Christ as the Lord of all of your life?

Response: WE DO CONFESS.

Minister: Do you accept for yourselves and for your child the covenant of grace, being assured that God loves your child and desires that, by prayer and example; you bring her/him up in the nurture of the Lord and in the ways of the community of God's people, the Church?

Response: WE DO ACCEPT, WITH GOD'S HELP.

*(Of the Sponsors or god-parents)*

Minister: Do you, who stand here as sponsors, solemnly promise to use your special relationship and influence that the child committed to your loving care may be taught a right and be brought up faithfully endeavoring to live as pleasing in the Lord?

Response: WE DO PROMISE, GOD EMPOWERING US.

*(Of the Congregation)*

Minister: Do you, members of this congregation receive this child into the love and care of this congregation and promise to walk with her/him in the joys, tasks, and challenges ahead?

Response: WE DO RECEIVE THIS CHILD IN CHRIST'S NAME.

### **PRAYER** *(All who are able may stand)*

Let us pray.

Don't let this be simply a social occasion, O Lord. Touch the hearts of those present who associate Christianity only with superficiality and have become accustomed to religious exercises devoid of integrity or real meaning. [A Child] is being baptized into your own life and death, Lord. Someone is being made a part of the community of your own body. Don't let this baptism be shunted off into a small corner of a big church. Make us all realize that we are profoundly involved in this sacrament of Holy Baptism because [a child] is being baptized to a lifetime of discipleship and ministry in Your Spirit and name. Amen.

### **THE ACT OF BAPTISM**

[The Christian name of the child], I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. May the blessing of God, the Lord, and Holy Spirit, descend upon you and remain with, you always. Amen.

### **PRESENTATION TO THE CONGREGATION**

The baptismal party and the pastor face the congregation.

Brethren and sistren of the household of faith, I commend to your love and care this child, whom we this day recognize as a member of the family of God. With God's help, may we so order our lives after the example of Christ's love, that this child, surrounded by steadfast love, may be established in faith, and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to Christ's discipleship.

*Let us pray.*

Minister: O GOD, grant that this child (name the child) as s/he grows in years may also grow in, grace and the knowledge of Lord Jesus Christ; and that by the renewing presence of the Holy Spirit, s/he may ever be a true child of God, loving and serving You faithfully all her/his days. So guide and uphold the parents and sponsors of this child (name the child) that, by loving care, wise counsel, and holy example, they may lead her/him into that life of faith whose strength is righteousness and whose fruit is everlasting joy and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*and/or*

Congregation: IT IS GOOD TO GIVE THANKS TO YOU, O GOD, FOR YOU US GLAD BY YOUR DEEDS. YOU HAVE LOVED US WITH A STEADFAST LOVE, AND WE BLESS YOUR NAME. TODAY, WE OFFER OUR PRAISE AND THANKS TO YOU IN BEHALF OF THIS CHILD, \_\_\_\_\_ WHO IS ASSURED OF YOUR LOVE EVEN BEFORE HE/SHE IS CONSCIOUSLY AWARE OF YOU. WE ASK THAT YOUR LOVING CARE MAY EVER SURROUND HIS/HER GROWING LIFE THAT HE/SHE MAY GROW AS JESUS GREW, IN WISDOM, IN STATURE; AND IN GRACE BEFORE YOUR PEOPLE AND BEFORE YOU. ENABLE HIM/HER BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, TO BECOME A TRUSTING AND OBEDIENT FOLLOWER OF JESUS CHRIST. BY YOUR GRACE, HELP HIS/HER FATHER, MOTHER, GODPARENTS, AND US, THE CONGREGATION, TO KEEP THE PROMISES WE HAVE MADE BEFORE YOU TODAY. IN THE NAME OF JESUS WE PRAY. AMEN:

#### **PRESENTATION OF THE NEWLY BAPTIZED TO THE CONGREGATION**

*The baptismal part will face the congregation.*

Friends, may we present to your love and care this Child (these children) whom we this day received as members of the body of Christ through membership in this Church, (name of local church). Please receive her/him/them into your fellowship as new recruits in Christ's body:

*Congregation may respond with an applause or:*

*People:* YES, WE DO RECEIVE HER/HIM! AMEN.

## **LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT OF INFANT BAPTISM II**

The Minister may ask all children to be baptized in the congregation to come forward together with the parents, godparents of/and the infant(s).

#### **ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION**

We give thanks to God, the Maker of all things, the giver of all life, for the creation and the birth of this child (these children).

Dearly beloved, in performing this sacrament of baptism we give testimony to our faith that our God is also the God of our children; that Jesus Christ who gave himself as a sacrifice for us also gave himself in love for our children. They belong, with us who believe, to the membership of the Church through the covenant made in Christ, and verified for us by God in this sacrament. The performance of this act of baptizing this child (these children) brings her/him/them into the fellowship of Christ and the Church. Our Lord Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the reign of heaven. Whoever does not receive the Reign of God as a little child, he/she shall not enter therein." And Jesus took a child up in his arms and put his hands upon them and blessed them.

Let us pray.

Most merciful God, we thank you for encouraging Christian parents to bring their children to You with the faith that they receive spiritual renewal through the Holy Spirit. We pray that this child (these children) may be led in due time to trust Christ our Saviour, and confessing him as Lord, through him who lives and reigns now and forever. Amen.

*The Minister shall address the parents.*

Minister: In bringing this child (these children) here to be baptized, do you confess your faith in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

Response: WE DO.

Minister: Do you accept for yourselves and for this child (these children) the covenant of God, being assured that God loves this child (these children) and desires to deliver her/him/them from all temptations and to live a life under the control of the Holy Spirit?

Response: WE DO ACCEPT, TRUSTING IN GOD'S HELP.

Minister: Do you promise to provide for your child (children) instruction in prayer, in the teachings of the Bible and in spiritual matters, and in all other things which a person ought to know and believe for her/his good and that of community?

Response: WE WILL, WITH GOD'S HELP.

Minister: Will you encourage her/him (them) when s/he is (they are) of proper age, to confirm in the house of God the faith you are now declaring?

Response: WE WILL SO ENCOURAGE HER/HIM (THEM).

What is the Christian name of this child?

Then the Pastor, taking the child in her/his arms, or leaving the child in the arms of the parent, pronouncing the Christian name of the child, shall sprinkle or pour water upon the head of the child, saying,

\_\_\_\_\_, I baptize you in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

The blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, descend upon you and dwell in your heart forever. Amen.

To the Congregation:

Do you as members of this Church acknowledge and accept the responsibility together with the parents and godparents of teaching and training this child, that being brought up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, he/she may be led in due time to trust Christ as Savior, and confessing him as Lord in baptism, be made a member of this Church? If so, will you signify your acceptance to this responsibility by standing?

Let us pray,

O Holy God, grant this child (these children) as s/he grows (they grow) in years, may also grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, and grant that by the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit, s/he may ever be a true child (children of God, serving You faithfully all her/his days, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then the Pastor shall say,

This child is (these children are) now publicly received into the fellowship of Christ's flock; and you the people of this congregation in receiving this child (these children) promise with God's help also to be her/his/their Saviour and Lord and come at last to God's eternal reign. Jesus said, "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me." May God bless us all. Amen.

#### **PRESENTATION OF THE NEWLY BAPTIZED TO THE CONGREGATION**

*The baptismal party will face the Congregation.*

Ministers: Beloved members of this Church, may we present to your love and care this child (these children) whom we this day acknowledge as new recruits to our faith and new members of the body of Christ through this Church, (Name of Church).

May you so order your lives that they see in you the embodiment of Christ's followers. God bless you all. Amen.

Congregation: *Applause or*

YES, WE PROMISE TO SO ORDER OUR LIVES, GOD HELPING US. AMEN.

## LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT OF INFANT BAPTISM III

### ADDRESS TO PARENTS AND THE CONGREGATION

Dearly beloved, you have brought your child (children) here desiring for her/him (them) Christian baptism, which is the sacrament of cleansing and entrance into the love and care of the Church of Christ. This is a service of thanksgiving as we offer to God the gratitude of our hearts for the happiness and hope which has come into our lives by the presence of a child. It is a recognition of God as the giver of life and a testimony that all children are God's. In performing this sacrament of baptism we give testimony to our faith that our God is also the God of our children and that Jesus Christ gave Himself in love also for our children. They belong, with us who believe, to the fellowship of this Christian community through the covenant of grace.

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them, for to such belongs the reign of God. Truly, I say to you, whosoever does not receive the Reign of God like a child shall not enter it." And He took them up in his arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them.

Let us pray,

Most merciful and loving God, we thank You for encouraging Christian parents to bring their children to You in the faith that they maybe renewed continually by Your grace through the gift of Your Holy Spirit. Look in gracious favor upon this child (these children), and grant that by the aid of Your Spirit s/he (they) may grow steadfast in faith, joyfully through hope, and so live the life which is now before her/him (them) that s/he (they) may enter triumphantly the life which is to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The minister shall address the parents.

Minister: In bringing this child (these children) now to be baptized, do you confess your faith in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

Response: WE DO CONFESS.

Minister: Do you accept for yourselves and for this child (these children) the covenant of grace, being assured that our God loves this child (these children) and desires that, by prayer and example, you bring her/him (them) up in the nurture of the Lord and in the ways of the Church of God?

Response: WE DO ACCEPT.

Minister: In presenting this child (these children) to the Lord, do you promise your dependence on divine grace, and partnership with the church, to teach her/him (them) the truths and duties of the Christian faith, and by prayer, precept and instruction of the Lord?

Response: WE DO, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

Minister: Will you encourage her/him (them) when s/he is (they are) of proper age, to make an open confirmation in the house of God of the faith and vows you are now declaring?

Response: WE WILL ENCOURAGE HIM/HER (THEM) GOD GUIDING US.



### **Address to the Sponsors**

Minister: Do you, who stand here as sponsors, solemnly promise to use your special relationship and influence that this child (these children) may be taught aright and be brought up faithfully endeavoring to live as pleasing to the Lord?

Response: WE DO.

*Let us pray.*

Grant, O Lord, to these Your servants, the grace to perform that which they have promised before You. Bestow upon those who stand as sponsors for this child (these children), the wisdom and the will to watch over her/him (them) in loving concern, to enlarge her/his (their) understanding and to open her/his (their) heart(s) to the persuasion of Your Spirit, and in all things to seek her/his (their) highest good. Amen

*Then the Minister shall say,*

What is the Christian name of this child?

*And the parents will give the name/names.*

The Minister, taking the child in her/his arms, or leaving the child in the arms of the parents and pronouncing the Christian name of the child, shall sprinkle or pour a small amount of water upon the head of the child, saying,

\_\_\_\_\_, I baptize you in the Name of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. And now may the blessing of God Almighty, descend upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

Then the Minister shall ask the congregation to stand and the baptismal party to face the congregation and shall proceed to say,

This child is (these children are) now publicly received into the love and care of the Church in the hope that hereafter s/he (they) may never be ashamed to confess faith in Christ but may be kept steadfast in her/ his (their) love and service, and continue as Christ's faithful servant(s) to her/his life's (their lives') end. And you, the people of this congregation, in receiving this child (these children) promise with God's help also to be her/his (their) sponsor spiritual guardians to the end that s/ he (they), of her/his (their) own free will may confess Christ as her/his (their) Saviour and Lord and come at last to God's eternal reign.

*Let us pray,*

O Loving God, grant that this child (these children) as s/he grows (they grow) in years, may also grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that by the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit, s/he (they) may ever be a true child (true children) of God, loving and serving you faithfully all her/his (their) days, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Minister may pronounce this blessing.*

The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you;

The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace;

Now and in the life everlasting. Amen.

*The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means.*

## THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM IV

Baptism is ordinarily celebrated as part of the worship of the congregation on the Lord's Day. It appropriately follows the reading and proclaiming of the Word.

If the liturgical practice of the congregation includes use of a paschal candle, it is lighted before the service begins.

After the sermon, an appropriate hymn, canticle psalm, or spiritual may be sung while the candidates, sponsors, and parents assemble at the baptismal font or pool. Care should be taken to ensure that the baptism is fully visible to the congregation. An elder or a representative of the congregation may lead a procession to the place of baptism, carrying a large pitcher of water.

### INVITATION/ WELCOME

The Minister addresses all present:

Hear the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of God, Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age. (Mat. 28:18-20)

Hear also these words from Holy Scripture:

The Minister then continues, using one or more of the following:

There is one body and one Spirit, just you were called to the one hope of your calling, One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. (1) — Ephesians 4:4-6

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (2.) — Gal. 3:27, 28

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of the One who called you out of darkness into God's marvelous light. (3) — 1 Peter 2:9

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. (4) — Romans 6:3, 4

The promise is for you, for your children and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls. (5) — Acts 2:39

### ADDRESS

The minister continues:

Obedying the word of our Lord Jesus, and confident of his promises, we baptize those whom God has called.

In baptism God claims us, and seals us to show that we belong to God. God frees us from sin and death, uniting us with Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection.

By water and the Holy Spirit, we are made members of the church, the body of Christ, and joined to Christ's ministry of love, peace, and justice.

Let us remember with joy our own baptism, as we celebrate this sacrament.

An elder presents each candidate for baptism, using the appropriate forms:

A. For adults and older children

On behalf of the congregation, I present (name) and (name) to receive the sacrament of Baptism.

B. For infants and younger children

On behalf of the congregation, I present (name) (son, daughter) of (name) and (name), to receive the sacrament of Baptism.

### QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

The minister addresses, in turn, candidates for baptism, parents bringing children for baptism, sponsors, and the congregation:

A. Adults and older children

The minister addresses the candidates for baptism:

(name) and (name) do you desire to be baptized?

The candidates respond:

I DO.

B. Parent(s) of infants and younger children

The minister addresses parents presenting children for baptism:

Do you desire that (name) and (name) be baptized?

The parent(s) respond:

I/WE DO.

Minister: Relying on God's grace, do you promise to live the Christian faith, and to teach that faith to your child?

The parent(s) respond:

I/WE DO.

C. Sponsors *(if any are present)*

The minister addresses the sponsors, if any are present:

Do you promise, through prayer and example, to support and encourage (name) to be a faithful Christian?

The sponsors respond:

I/WE DO.

### CONGREGATIONAL ASSENT

All who are able may stand as the congregation is asked to make promises.

Minister: Do you, as members of *the* church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture (name/s) by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging him/her/them to know and follow Christ and to be faithful members of his church?

The people respond:

People: WE PROMISE OUR LOVE, SUPPORT AND CARE.

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Through baptism we enter the covenant God has established. Within this covenant God gives us new life, guards us from evil, and nurtures us in love. In embracing that covenant, we choose whom we will serve, by turning from evil and turning to Jesus Christ.

The minister then asks the following questions of the candidates for baptism and/or the parents or guardians of children being presented for baptism.

As God embraces you within the covenant, I ask you to reject sin, to profess your faith in Christ Jesus, and to confess the faith of the church, the faith in which we baptize.

## **RENUNCIATIONS**

The minister continues, using one of the following:

- (1) Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?

I DO.

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Lord and Savior, trusting in his grace and love?

I DO.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love?

I WILL, WITH GOD'S HELP.

- (2) Do you renounce all evil, and powers in the world which defy God's righteousness and love.

I RENOUNCE THEM.

Do you renounce the ways of sin that separate you from the love of God?

I RENOUNCE THEM.

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Lord and Savior?

I DO.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love, to your life's end?

I WILL, WITH GOD'S HELP.

- (3) Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world.

I DO.

Who is your Lord and Savior?

JESUS CHRIST IS MY LORD AND SAVIOR.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love?

I WILL, WITH GOD'S HELP.

## **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

The Minister continues:

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

The people may stand.

All present profess their faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed, using the question and answer form (A) or reciting it directly (B).

- (A) Do you believe in God, the Creator?

I BELIEVE IN GOD, THE CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST, GOD'S ONLY SON, OUR LORD, WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY, SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, WAS CRUCIFIED, DIED, AND WAS BURIED; JESUS CHRIST DESCENDED TO THE DEAD. ON THE THIRD DAY JESUS CHRIST ROSE AGAIN; JESUS CHRIST ASCENDED

INTO HEAVEN, JESUS CHRIST IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER, AND WILL COME TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING. AMEN.

(B) I believe in God, Holy, Creator of heaven and earth.

I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST, GOD'S ONLY SON, OUR LORD, WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT, BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY, SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, WAS CRUCIFIED, DIED, AND WAS BURIED; JESUS CHRIST DESCENDED TO THE DEAD. ON THE THIRD DAY JESUS CHRIST ROSE AGAIN; JESUS CHRIST ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, JESUS CHRIST IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER, AND WILL COME TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD.

I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH, THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY, AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING. AMEN.

The minister asks one of the following questions of those being baptized on profession of their faith:

(1) Will you be a faithful member of this congregation, share in its worship and ministry through your prayers and gifts, your study and service, and so fulfill your calling to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?

I WILL, WITH GOD'S HELP.

(2) Will you devote yourself to the church's teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers?

I WILL, WITH GOD'S HELP.

Water is poured visibly and audibly into the font.

### **PRAYER OF BAPTISM**

One of the following prayers is said by the minister. The congregation may be seated.

(1) Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.

Minister: We give you thanks, Eternal God, for you nourish and sustain all living things by the gift of water. In the beginning of time, your Spirit moved over the watery chaos, calling forth order and life.

In the time of Noah, you destroyed evil by the waters of the flood, giving righteousness a new beginning.

You led Israel out of slavery, through the waters of the sea, into the freedom of the promised land.

In the waters of Jordan Jesus was baptized by John and anointed with your Spirit. By the baptism of his own death and resurrection, Christ set us free from sin and death, and opened the way to eternal life.

We thank you, O God, for the water of baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. From it we are raised to share in the Lord's resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the power of the Holy Spirit.

*The minister may touch the water,*

Send your Spirit to move over this water that it may be a fountain of deliverance and rebirth. Wash away the sin of *all* who *are* cleansed by it. Raise *them* to new life, and graft *them* to *the* body of Christ. Pour out your

Holy Spirit upon *them*, that they may have power to do your will, and continue forever in the risen life of Christ. To you, God, Jesus Christ, and Holy Spirit, one God, be all praise, honor, and glory, now and forever.

AMEN.

(2) Minister: The Lord be with you.

People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.

Minister: Eternal and gracious God, we give you thanks. In countless ways you have revealed yourself in ages past, and have blessed **us** with signs of your grace.

We praise you that through the waters of the sea, you led your people Israel out of bondage, into freedom in the land of your promise.

We praise you for sending Jesus your Son, who for us was baptized in the waters of the Jordan, and was anointed as the Christ by your Holy Spirit. Through the baptism of Jesus Christ's death and resurrection, you set us free from the bondage of sin and death, and give us cleansing and rebirth.

We praise you that in baptism you give us your Holy Spirit, who teaches us and leads us into all truth, filling us with a variety of gifts, that we might proclaim the gospel to all nations and serve you as a royal priesthood.

*The minister may pour the water visibly.*

Pour out your Spirit upon us and upon this water, that this font may be your womb of new birth. May *all* who now pass through these waters be delivered from death to life, from bondage to freedom, from sin to righteousness. Bind *them* to the household of faith, guard *them* from all evil. Strengthen *them* to serve you with joy until the day you make all things new. To you be all praise, honor, and glory; through Jesus Christ **our** Savior, who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns forever. Amen

(3) The minister may give thanks over the water in his or her own words:

- a. praising God for God's faithfulness in the covenant;
- b. thankfully remembering God's reconciling acts such as:
  - the cleansing and rebirth in the flood in the time of Noah;
  - the exodus through the waters of the sea;
  - Jesus' baptism in the Jordan;
  - the baptism of Jesus' death and his resurrection.
- c. invoking the Holy Spirit
  - to attend and empower the baptism;
  - to make the water a water of redemption and rebirth;
  - to equip the church for faithfulness.

The prayer concludes with an ascription of praise to the triune God.

## **ACT OF BAPTISM**

The minister asks the parent/s to name the child.

Minister: By what name will your child be called?

Parent/s: \_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

The candidates, other than infants, who are to be baptized by pouring or sprinkling may kneel. Or if there are candidates to be immersed, they walk down into the water.

Calling each candidate by his or her Christian (given) name or names only, the minister shall pour or sprinkle water visibly and generously on the candidate's head, or immerse the candidate in the water, while saying:

(Name), I baptize you in the name of God, and Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### **ACT OF PRAISE**

A doxology or another act of praise may follow the baptism.

### **PRAYER FOR THE BAPTIZED**

- (1) For the newly baptized and new members

MERCIFUL GOD, YOU CALL US BY NAME AND PROMISE TO EACH OF US YOUR CONSTANT LOVE. WATCH OVER YOUR SERVANTS, (NAME) OF (NAME). DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOS-PEL; STRENGTHEN THEIR COMMITMENT TO FOLLOW THE WAY OF CHRIST; AND KEEP THEM IN THE FAITH AND COMMUNION OF YOUR CHURCH. INCREASE THEIR COMPASSION FOR OTHERS; SEND THEM INTO THE WORLD IN WITNESS TO YOUR LOVE; AND BRING THEM TO THE FULLNESS OF YOUR PEACE AND GLORY; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

- (2) For parents whose children have just been baptized

GRACIOUS GOD, GIVER OF ALL LIFE, WE PRAY FOR PARENTS (NAME) AND (NAME). GIVE THEM WISDOM AND PATIENCE TO GUIDE THEIR CHILD IN THE WAY OF JESUS CHRIST AND THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH.

LET YOUR PEACE AND JOY DWELL IN THEIR HOME, THAT THEIR FAMILY LIFE MAY BE INSTRUCTED BY FAITH, SUSTAINED BY PRAYER AND GOVERNED BY LOVE. STRENGTHEN THEM IN THEIR OWN BAPTISM, THAT THEY MAY REJOICE AS CHILDREN OF GOD, AND SERVE YOU FAITHFULLY, IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.

- (3) For newly baptized infants and children

EVER-LIVING GOD, IN YOUR MERCY YOU PROMISED TO BE NOT ONLY OUR GOD, BUT ALSO THE GOD OF OUR CHILDREN. WE THANK YOU FOR RECEIVING (NAME) AND (NAME) BY BAPTISM. KEEP THEM ALWAYS IN YOUR LOVE. GUIDE THEM AS THEY GROW IN FAITH. PROTECT THEM IN ALL THE DANGERS AND TEMPTATIONS OF LIFE. BRING THEM TO CONFESS JESUS CHRIST AS THEIR LORD AND SAVIOR AND BE HIS FAITHFUL DISCIPLES TO THEIR LIFE'S END; IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST. AMEN.

### **BENEDICTION**

The minister then says to all assembled at the font:

The peace of Christ be with you.

They respond:

AND ALSO WITH YOU.

The people may exchange signs of God's peace, greeting those who have been baptized.

All return to their places. An appropriate hymn, psalm, or spiritual may be sung.

The service continues with the prayers of the people, which will include petitions for the newly baptized and for those who will nurture them.

When the Lord's Supper is celebrated, it is appropriate for the newly baptized to receive Communion first.

# **AN OUTLINE OF THE SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY INCLUDING AN ALTERNATIVE SERVICE FOR THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM**

## **GATHERING**

Call to Worship  
Prayer of the Day or Opening Prayer  
Hymn of Praise, Psalm, or Spiritual  
Confession and Pardon  
Canticle, Psalm, Hymn, or Spiritual

## **THE WORD**

Prayer for Illumination  
First Reading  
Psalm  
Second Reading  
Anthem, Hymn, Psalm, Canticle, or Spiritual  
Gospel Reading  
Sermon  
Hymn, Canticle, Psalm, or Spiritual  
Baptism  
Introduction  
Presentation of the Candidates  
Thanksgiving Over the Water  
Profession of Faith The Baptism  
Laying on of Hands  
[Baptism Garment]  
[Giving of the Light]  
Welcome  
The Peace  
Hymn, Psalm, or Spiritual  
Prayers of the People  
(If the Eucharist is not celebrated.)

## **THE EUCHARIST**

Offering  
Invitation to the Lord's Table  
Great Thanksgiving Lord's Prayer  
Breaking of the Bread  
Communion of the People

## **SENDING**

Hymn, Spiritual, Canticle, or Psalm  
Charge and Blessing



# THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM OF ADULTS

## THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM OF ADULTS

In churches where infant baptism is not practiced, baptism is postponed until the teen years or even later. This ritual is significant when the persons concerned has, on his own, decided on this rite of entrance into the church. Therefore, it is necessary that the candidates be encouraged to undergo conscientious training and instruction in church membership.

Since this is an event marking the full membership of the candidate in a congregation, thus bestowing upon him full privileges of a member such as participation in the Lord's Supper, it would be best to plan to have this service prior to the celebration of the Lord's Supper. And, like Infant Baptism, it is most meaningful if held as part of a regular church service.

In the case of youth baptism, the presence of parents (and even of sponsors, if desired) in the rite is meaningful since the youth will continue for some time yet to rely on the parents' guidance and counsel. The participation and presence of the parents in this act is, therefore, encouraged.

### ORDER OF SERVICE FOR ADULT BAPTISM

#### ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION

Friends, we are about to receive by baptism into the fellowship of this church, (name/s of candidate/s) who has/have received instruction in church membership. Let us remember that in baptism we enter into union with Christ and experience with him death and resurrection through our own dying to self-centered lives and rising again a New Person-for-others. Furthermore, in the use of water, we symbolize the washing away of our past offenses and offer to use a clean slate on which to start life over again, empowered and enabled through the Holy Spirit. Also, through this act, we are initiated into the community of Christians, God's own people on earth. Therefore, we enter into this act joyfully and humbly.

#### DECLARATION OF FAITH

A Creed or a Statement of Faith which the candidate himself or another may have prepared.

#### VOWS

*To the Candidate/s:*

Your presence here today is an indication that you wish to live a new life — a life in Christ — and be joined with this community of Christ's followers. Do you confess now publicly your faith in Jesus Christ and desire to be baptized into the community of God's people?

Response: I DO.

Do you promise, with God's help, to live as a new person, faithfully living and working for the good of all your fellowmen?

Response: I DO.

To the Parents and Sponsors for Youth Candidates, if present:

Do you promise to continue to pattern your lives after Jesus Christ that you may be for these young people examples of Christian love and responsibility?

Response: WE DO.

To the Congregation:

Do you, the members of this congregation, receive this man into the love and care of this congregation and promise to walk by him in the joys, tasks, and sufferings that God sets before you as his people?

Response (*standing*): WE DO.

**PRAYER** (*by all*)

O God, sustain all of us as we strive to fulfill the promises we have just made in your church. Bind us to one another in joy and caring, that together we may grow in faithfulness to you and to the tasks you have given us to do. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

**THE BAPTISM**

What is your given name?

\_\_\_\_\_, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. And may the blessings of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be upon you now and always. Amen.

**PRAYER**

O God, we praise you, we give thanks to you, we sing for joy, that another person has joined and been joined to your Church. Bless and guide him in the days ahead that his membership with us in your church may bear the fruit of faithfulness and love. Keep us all faithful to the trust and the tasks that are ours in your church and in your world. Bind us together in your love and care with this new member and with all your children everywhere, that we may live out the fullness of life you promise to all mankind. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

**BLESSING**

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we can ask or conceive, by the power which is at work among us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus from generation to generation. Amen.

**ORDER OF SERVICE FOR ADULT BAPTISM II**

**ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION**

Friends, we are about to receive by baptism into the fellowship of this church (name/s of candidate/s), who has/have received instruction in church membership. Let us now attend to this act prayerfully.

Candidate/s: Tell me, please, about this baptism in Jesus Christ.

Minister: In baptism, we enter into union with Christ and experience with him death and resurrection through your own dying to self-centered lives and rising again a New Person-for-others. Furthermore, in the use of water, we symbolize the washing away of your past offenses and offer you a clean slate upon which to write the story of your life over again, empowered by the Holy Spirit. Through this act also, you are initiated into the community of Christians, God's own people on earth.

Candidate/s: I believe that God loves the world so much that he gave us his only Son. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. I believe that Jesus Christ calls us to be his followers and thus share with him sonship to God. I believe that the Church is the community of Christ's followers and that when I accept Jesus Christ, I must become a part of that Community, the Body of Christ, I shall strive with other followers to do God's will as revealed in the Bible and in the events of daily life.

Minister to the Parents and Sponsors: You have heard the confession of belief and promises of this youth entrusted to your care. Have you anything to say?

Parents and Sponsors: We shall try to live as Christ would have us live so as to make of our lives living examples of Christian obedience. So help us, God.

Minister to the Congregation: You have witnessed the confessions and promises of these our loved ones in front of you. Do you wish to assume your responsibilities as members of this congregation?

Congregation (rising): Yes, we heartily welcome into the fellowship of this church (name/s of candidate/s) and now promise to uphold him through our love and understanding and help guide him in the ways of the Lord. So help us God.

#### **PRAYER**

Lord God, we give you praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you especially today for calling by baptism into membership of the church. May he never cease to wonder at what you have done for him. Help him to continue firmly in the Christian faith, to bear witness to your love, and to let the Spirit mould his character and conduct.

We ask that you make the baptism of all of us real and complete, so that we may live together in the joy and power of the Holy Spirit, and at the last live forever in your presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **PRAYER**

Lord God, we give you praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you especially today for calling \_\_\_\_\_ by baptism into membership of the church. May he never cease to wonder at what you have done for him. Help him to continue firmly in the Christian faith, to bear witness to your love, and to let the Spirit mould his character and conduct.

We ask that you make the baptism of all of us real and complete, so that we may live together in the joy and power of the Holy Spirit, and at the last live forever in your presence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **BLESSING**

May the God who gives us peace make you completely his, and keep your whole being, spirit, soul, and body free from all fault, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen. (I Thess. 5:22, 28).

#### **ORDER OF SERVICE FOR ADULT BAPTISM III**

Dearly beloved, Our Lord Jesus Christ sent forth his disciples to teach all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. This person (these persons), in obedience to the command of Christ, has (have) indicated his (her, their) desire to be so baptized. In receiving this sacrament he (she, they) receives (receive) Jesus Christ as his (her, their) Saviour for the forgiveness of his (her, their) sin; he (she, they) receives (receive) the Holy Spirit for the renewal of his (her, their) life, and hereby makes (make) his (her, their) entrance into the Christian fellowship of this congregation and of the worldwide Christian fellowship. In submitting himself (herself, themselves) for baptism he (she, they) thereby indicates (indicate) his (her, their) purpose to live in and for Christ, in and for the Church, and in and for the world.

The Apostle Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, said to the people: "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him."

This congregation gives thanks that God has called you and that you have now come to be baptized and pray that you may be renewed and strengthened by the Holy Spirit, and that your faith may not fail.

Question: Do you believe through your trust in Jesus Christ as Saviour as expressed through the performance of this act that you receive the forgiveness of your sins?

Answer: I DO.

Question: Are you determined by the help of the Holy Spirit to live a Christian life of service and to make Christ the Lord of your life and of all your acts?

Answer: I DO.

Question: Do you desire by this act of baptism to be received into the membership of this congregation and of the Church universal?

Answer: I DO.

Question: Do you promise to attend the services of the Church, to submit to its government, and to work for its peace and unity?

Answer: DO.

*Let us pray.*

Almighty and everlasting God, set apart this water from common use to the sacred purpose to which it is appointed; and grant that this person (these persons) may receive the remission of sins, and being born anew by water and the Holy Spirit may die unto sin and live unto righteousness as Thy faithful servant (servants). Amen.

Then with the congregation reverently standing, and the person to be baptized kneeling, the Pastor shall say.

I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

The blessing of God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, descend upon thee, and dwell in your heart forever. Amen.

*Let us pray.*

Almighty and eternal God, receive, we beseech thee, and sanctify by the Holy Spirit, this person (these persons.) who has (have) now been baptized in Thy name according to Thy word.

May he (she/they), continue in the fullness of Thy grace and ever re-main among the number of Thy faithful people through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then, all standing, the Pastor shall say,

In that you have made confession of your faith, I do now, in the name of Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church, admit you to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper and to the fellowship of Christ's Church.

*Then the Pastor shall give this charge.*

And now, as a member of Christ's Church, go forth into the world as Christ's witness (witnesses); be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; heal the afflicted; honor all men; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

*Then the Pastor shall say to those assembled.*

We receive this person (these persons) into the congregation of Christ's flock, and pray that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but strive under His banner, against wrong and sin; and continue as Christ's servant and witness to the very end. Amen.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you forever. Amen.

#### **ORDER OF SERVICE FOR ADULT BAPTISM IV**

Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth. Dearly beloved: Our Lord Jesus Christ sent forth his disciples to teach all nations and to baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; and he promised to be with them unto the end of the world. Since those early days this sacrament of baptism has been the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace. It signifies entrance into a new life of fellowship with Jesus Christ, through whom we have forgiveness of sin.

As you are baptized now with water, so may you also be baptized with the Holy Spirit unto a continual renewal of life. Though the form of this act may have changed with the centuries, the essential and unchanging condition for baptism has been the faith and consecration of the believer. In submit-ting yourself for baptism, you indicate your intention to live in and for Christ, in and for the Church, and in and for the world. We welcome you as you come to

make your confession of faith and to receive this sacrament of cleansing and divine fellowship, as commanded by our Lord for all believers.

Hear the words of the Apostle Peter who, on the day of Pentecost, said to the people, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to Him."

This call to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ is addressed to you. Be assured that as you truly profess your faith and are baptized into His name, this sacrament shall be to you the sign and seal of the washing away of your sins, of your regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and of your full entrance into the fellowship of Christ's Church.

This congregation gives thanks to God for your coming, and prays with you that your faith may not fail. In the hearing of this congregation, you shall now answer the following questions:

Question: Do you confess your faith in God as your heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord and in the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier?

Answer: I DO SO CONFESS.

Question: Do you repent of your sins before Almighty God; and are you determined by the help of the Holy Spirit, to live a Christian life of faithful service, making Christ the Lord of your life?

Answer: I SO REPENT AND AM SO DETERMINED.

Question: Do you desire by this act of baptism to be received into the membership of this congregation and of the Church universal?

Answer: I DO SO DESIRE.

Question: Do you promise to participate in the worship and work of the Church, to submit to its discipline, and to strive for its peace and unity?

Answer: I DO SO PROMISE.

*Then the Pastor shall say,*

Let us pray.

Almighty and Eternal God, regard the prayer of this congregation that what we do here may be ratified in heaven. And now, O Lord, bless this water which we set apart from a common use to the sacred purpose to which it is appointed; and grant that this person, as he receives this baptism, may receive of thee remission of sins and live unto righteousness as Thy faithful servant until his life's end. Amen.

The congregation reverently standing and the person to be baptized kneeling, the pastor, sprinkling water on his head, shall say,

\_\_\_\_\_, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Then may be said or sung,*

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.

*Then with the congregation seated, the pastor shall say,*

Let us pray.

O God, holy and immortal, the refuge of all who seek Thee, the life of them that believe, we beseech Thee to receive and sanctify by Thy Holy Spirit *this person* who has now been baptized in Thy name according to Thy Word. Bless him and bestow upon him the manifold gifts of Thy grace; defend him from temptation, and equip him to fight the good fight of faith. Grant that Thy strength may be made perfect in his weakness, and keep him steadfast in Thy love and service to the end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Then the pastor shall address the one baptized, saying,*

Beloved in the Lord, inasmuch as you have made a public confession of your faith and been baptized, I do now, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church, admit you the sacrament of the Lord's Supper and to full fellowship of His Church.

And now as a member of Christ's Church, go forth into the world as Christ's witness; be of good courage; hold fast that which is good; strengthen the faith-hearted; support the weak; heal the afflicted; honor all men; love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.

*Then the pastor ask the congregation to rise and together make the following pledge.*

Now we, members of this Church, on behalf of the Church universal, welcome you with joy unto our fellowship. We offer to you a full share in our Christian worship and work, and pledge to you our love and prayers. God grant that loving and being loved, blessing and being blessed, serving and being served, we may be His faithful witnesses and servants, and so be prepared while we dwell together on earth for the perfect fellowship of the life everlasting.

*All standing, the pastor shall give the closing prayer and benediction, saying,*

Let us pray.

Almighty and most merciful God, sanctify to us all the ministration of this holy sacrament. Forgive us wherein we have come short of the grace of our own baptism by wandering from Thy ways, and bring us back to the knowledge of Thy grace and to perfect faith in thee. In-crease this knowledge and confirm this faith in us forevermore. Give a full measure of Thy Holy Spirit to our brother in Christ; that, being born anew and made an heir of everlasting salvation, he may continue to be Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto his life's end; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And now, may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and the blessing of God Al-mighty, the Father, the son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

## **ORDER OF SERVICE FOR ADULT BAPTISM V (BY IMMERSION)**

### **INSTRUCTIONS**

Congregations in which baptism by immersion is frequently or regularly observed will usually want to have a baptistry inside the church edifice. It should be beautiful and of adequate dimensions. In keeping with an early practice of the church, the Pastor and the candidates for baptism may be attired in white robes provided for such occasions. Each one should be well weighted around the bottom to prevent its floating on the water. The robes should always be freshly laundered after each use.

After a person has made his/her confession of faith in Christ he/she should be guided in preparation for Baptism. He/she should be counselled immediately following his/her confession of faith. And there should be a period of instruction preceding the Baptism.

Immediately before the baptism is to take place, the candidates should be instructed privately and quietly by the Pastor in these or similar words.

Come down the baptistry steps (or into the body of water if it be a stream or on the seashore) so as not to splash the water. Take the place in the pool to which I shall lead you, and which will face the steps leading out/. Stand relaxed in the pool.

Keep your feet apart, and flat on the floor. When your body bends in the act of immersion, it will be slightly at the knee. Do not try to lower or raise yourself; it will be easier and more natural to let me govern those movements.

At the beginning of the service in the pool, when I shall indicate, put your right hand in your left, the palms upward, which I shall clasp in one of mine. Keep your elbows at your sides.

Before your immersion into the water, I will pronounce the Baptismal formula, using your name in it, and will conclude it with an Amen. When you hear the Amen, you may take a deep breath, and hold it. My lowering and raising you will be gentle and slow, like a burial, with no splashing or dashing. I will not keep you under the water more than ten seconds.

When you are raised up it will have symbolized your birth, or resurrection, into the new life with Christ. Your emotions will most likely be those of joy. I shall then guide you to the steps leading out of the pool.

When the Baptism takes place in an open body of water such as a stream it is best for the newly baptized persons to stand in a group to the left of the Pastor until all candidates have been baptized, and then to come with the Pastor up out of the water to the congregation which waits on the shore.

Go slowly up the steps or *out of the body of water* to make complete a beautiful and reverent portrayal of your conversion experience.

### **THE SERVICE OF BAPTISM**

The Administration of Baptism may be a part of the regular Sunday Worship, at an appropriate place in the order of worship. If it occurs in a service in which is also an observation of the Lord's Supper, the Baptismal service should precede the Holy Communion, so that the newly baptized persons may also partake of the Lord's Supper.

Let the Candidate for Baptism enter, following behind the Elders during the regular processional.

### **PRELUDE AND PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

And let them occupy a place reserved for them. Then at the time arranged for it in the service, let the Pastor or an Elder say,

Hear the words of the Gospel, written by Saint John in the third chapter: Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, You must be born anew.' The wind blows where it wills and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know when it comes or whether it goes; so it is with every one who is born of the Spirit."

Beloved, you hear in this Gospel the clear words of Christ that unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Thus you see the great necessity of the Sacrament. Likewise, immediately before his ascension into heaven Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age. (Matt. 28:18-20).

When Saint Peter, the Apostle, first preached the Gospel many were cut to the heart and said to him and the rest of the Apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and your children and all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him."

Do not doubt, therefore, but earnestly believe that He will favorably receive these persons who repent, and come to Him by faith; that He will grant

them forgiveness of their sins, and give them the Holy Spirit; that He will give them the blessing of eternal life and make them partakers of His everlasting kingdom.

Wherefore being persuaded on the good will of our heavenly Father to-ward these persons declared by his Son Jesus Christ, let us faithfully and devotedly give thanks to Him.

The Pastor shall then say to the person (persons) to be baptized; and each one shall answer, as follows,

Dearly beloved, who are come hitherto desiring to be baptized, you are now faithfully, for your part, in the presence of God and this congregation, to promise and answer the following questions:

Question: Do you receive and profess the Christian faith, and in this faith, do you desire to be baptized?

Answer: I DO.

Question: Do you receive and profess the Christian faith, and in this faith, do you desire to be baptized?

Answer: I DO.

Question: Do you confess your sins, and turn from them with godly sorrow, and put all your trust in the mercy of God, which is in Christ Jesus; and do you promise in His strength to lead a sober, righteous, and godly life?

Answer: I DO.

*The Pastor shall then offer the following or appropriate prayer.*

Gracious God, our Father, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has revealed through Him how we may become Thy children; renew us spiritually as we again see portrayed Thy redemptive love, and bestow Thy favor, we pray Thee, upon this/these thy servant/s who comes/ come now to be baptized, that his/her/their life/lives shall increasingly attain to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; in whose name we pray. Amen.

*Then let the Pastor lead the candidate/candidates into the baptistry or body of water.*

*On reaching the position for the baptism, let the Pastor hold the clasped hands of the candidate, and say quietly to him/her as he does so.*

God is the witness to what you are doing. Center your thoughts on Him, as I pronounce the Baptismal Formula.

*Then let the Pastor stand a little to the rear of the candidate. With the candidate's hands firmly held in one of his, let the Pastor raise his other hand and arm, in an attitude of Invocation, and say in the words that follow,*

By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom you have confessed your faith, I baptize you \_\_\_\_\_.

*Here let the Pastor pronounce the name of the candidate being baptized.*

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

*Then let the Pastor gradually lower him backward into the water to the depth of a few inches; pause a moment to represent the burial; and then, gradually raise him up.*

*The lowering should be done so slowly there is no splashing of the water, but only a gentle ripple; and the pause in the water should be so quiet there is no stirring of the water, and the raising movement should be equally slow to prevent any noticeable suction of the water. Deliberate and gradual actions, rather than quick and sudden movements eliminate noisy splashing and suction sounds in the water, and contribute to a beautiful administration of the ordinance.*

*Then let the Pastor, standing between the people and the candidate, lead him slowly to the exit from the baptistry. When the baptism takes place in a stream, on the seashore, or other open body of water, the Pastor leads the newly baptized persons as a group out of the water to the waiting congregation.*

*Then let the Pastor say,*

The Lord bless you and keep you;  
The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you;  
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.  
(Numbers 6:24-26)

*Or this*

Let your heart rejoice in the salvation of God. (Ps. 13:5)



*Or this*

May the joy of Jesus Christ our Lord make full your joy. (John 15:11)

*And let the same procedure be followed for each person who is to be baptized.*

*Following the Baptism of the last candidate, let the Pastor face the congregation, and quote appropriate Scripture passages, such as these that follow.*

Jesus became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (Heb. 5:9b).

For in Christ Jesus you are all *children* of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3:26-28)

So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God... Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children (Eph. 2:19; 5:1).

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. (Romans 8:1)

Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; and the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. (II Cor 5:17)

*Then let the people stand and sing an appropriate hymn\*\* after which the pastor shall pronounce the benediction, using one of those which follow*

Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen. (Eph. 3:20-21)

*Or this*

Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Saviour through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time now and forever. Amen (Jude 24:25).

*The Pastor may pronounce this blessing.*

The Lord bless thee, and keep thee;

The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious to unto thee;

The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.

Both now and in the lift everlasting. Amen.

Other passages of Scripture on the significance of baptism which can be used in place of those quoted or in addition to them include: Gal. 3:26-27; Romans 6:1-11; I Peter 3:20-21. Appropriate passages on the meaning of the decision to accept Christ include Gal. 5:16-25; Col. 3:1- 17.

Hymns appropriate for the occasion include "O Happy Day, That Fixed My Choice"

The Doxology

"Take My Life and Let It Be"

## **ORDER FOR BAPTISM**

### **Infants and Young Children**

Water in adequate supply may be in the baptistry, a font, a bowl, or a pitcher, depending upon local custom. If it is the practice of the local church to use a paschal candle, it may stand near the place of baptism and be lighted.

#### **INVITATION**

The pastor and others who will lead the baptismal service may invite those who desire baptism for themselves or their children to come to the place where baptism will be celebrated. They may go out into the congregation to

escort the candidates to the place for baptism. The invitation may be given informally, in words that reflect the growing relationship between the local church and the candidates.

As an expression of a special ministry of hospitality to children to be baptized, all children present may be invited to stand near children who are to be baptized.

A baptismal hymn may be sung.

### **WELCOME**

Minister: Dear friends, as we come to this font of living water, let us recall the meaning of baptism.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

People: FOR BY ONE SPIRIT WE WERE ALL BAPTIZED INTO ONE BODY — JEWS OR GREEKS, SLAVES OR FREE — AND ALL WERE MADE TO DRINK OF ONE SPIRIT.

Minister: Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

### **ADDRESS**

The minister may address those gathered, using one of these options or other words based on scripture.

Minister: Jesus said: Unless we are born anew, we cannot see the reign of God; unless we are born of water and the Spirit, we cannot enter God's new order.

Paul the apostle said: All of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into Christ's death. We were buried therefore with Christ by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead, to the glory of God, we too might walk in newness of life.

For baptism of older children, youth, and adults.

Minister: Baptism is the sacrament through which we are united to Jesus Christ and given part in Christ's ministry of reconciliation. Baptism is the visible sign of an invisible event: the reconciliation of people to God. It shows the death of self and the rising to a life of obedience and praise. It shows also the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on those whom God has chosen. In baptism, God works in us the power of forgiveness, the renewal of the Spirit and the knowledge of the call to be God's people always.

This response may follow either option.

People: THIS IS THE WATER OF BAPTISM. OUT OF THIS WATER WE RISE WITH NEW LIFE, FORGIVEN OF SIN AND ONE IN CHRIST, MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY.

### **QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES**

If there are no infants or young children to be baptized, continue with the questions for older children and adults.

#### **INFANTS AND YOUNG CHILDREN**

These questions may be used when the candidates are unable to speak for themselves. If more than one child is to be baptized, all parents and sponsors may respond in unison.

Minister: *(addressing the parent(s))*

Do you desire to have your child(ren) baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

Parent(s): I/WE DO.

Minister: *(addressing the parent(s) and sponsor(s), if any)*

Will you encourage this child/these children to renounce the powers of evil and to receive the freedom of new life in Christ?

Parent(s) and Sponsor(s): I/WE WILL, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

Minister: Will you teach this child/these children that he/she/they may be led to profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Parent(s) and Sponsor(s): I/WE WILL, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

Minister: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple(s), to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Parent(s) and Sponsor(s): I/WE DO, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

Minister: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow with this child/these children in the Christian faith, to help this child/these children to be a faithful member/faithful members of the church of Jesus Christ, by celebrating Christ's presence, by furthering Christ's mission in all the world, and by offering the nurture of the Christian church so that she/he/they may affirm her/his/their baptism?

Parent(s) and Sponsor(s): I/WE DO, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

If there are no older children or adults to be baptized, continue with the congregational assent.

#### **OLDER CHILDREN AND ADULTS**

These questions may be used when the candidates are unable to speak for themselves. If more than one person is to be baptized, they may respond to the questions in unison.

Minister: *addressing the candidate(s)*

(Name), do you desire to be baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

Candidates: I DO.

Minister: *addressing the sponsor(s) if any*

Are you ready with God's help to guide and encourage (name(s)) by counsel and example, in prayer and with love, to follow the way of Jesus Christ?

Sponsor(s): I AM.

Minister: *addressing the candidate(s)*

Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

Candidates: I DO.

Minister: Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Candidate(s): I DO.

Minister: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Candidate(s): I PROMISE, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

Minister: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

Candidate(s): I PROMISE, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

#### **CONGREGATIONAL ASSENT**

All who are able may stand as the congregation is asked to make promises.

Minister: Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism.

Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to the one(s) about to be baptized, as he/ she/they live(s) and grow(s) in Christ?

People: WE PROMISE OUR LOVE, SUPPORT, AND CARE.

### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

All who are able may stand. Responses are made in unison by each worshiper, including the candidate(s) for baptism.

Minister: Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God.

An ancient baptismal creed, another creed, or a statement of faith may be used in full or in an abbreviated version. The style should allow congregational response. Forms of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines Statement of Faith, historic creeds, and other affirmations of faith.

When incorporating baptism and confirmation or reception of members, begin the Order for Baptism here.

### **PRAYER OF BAPTISM**

The congregation may be seated. A prayer may be offered, using the pastor's own words.

Minister: Christ be with you. People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Minister: Let us pray.

Bless by your Holy Spirit, gracious God, this water. By your Holy Spirit save those who confess the name of Jesus Christ that sin may have no power over them. Create new life in the one/all baptized this day that she/he/they may rise in Christ. Glory to you, eternal God, the one who was, and is, and shall always be, world without end. Amen.

### **ACT OF BAPTISM**

#### **NAMING OF A CHILD**

When a child is baptized, as each child is handed into the arms of the pastor, the parent(s) may be asked to name the child.

Minister: By what name will your child be called?

Parent(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
(name)

Minister: (name), I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

People: AMEN.

The Minister may lay hands on the head of the baptized and say these or similar words.

Minister: The Holy Spirit be upon you, (name), child of God, disciple of Christ, member of the church.

### **ACT OF PRAISE**

A doxology or another act of praise may follow the baptism.

If this order is being used in conjunction with one of the Orders for Affirmation of Baptism, return to the Order for Confirmation at the prayer.

### **PRAYER FOR THE BAPTIZED**

A prayer for the baptized may be said, using one of the following or the minister's own words.

Includes optional words for use when a child is baptized.

Minister: Let us pray for the one/those baptized today.

Gracious God, you have filled the world with joy by giving us the gift of Jesus. Bless this newly baptized person/these newly baptized people. May she/he/they be filled with joy; may he/she/they never be ashamed to confess a personal faith in you.

Bless the parent(s) and sponsor(s) of this child/these children. May she/he/they always show her/his/their gratitude for the life you have given by loving caring for (name(s)).

Bless these your faithful people. Unite them in the peace of Christ and the company of the Holy Spirit.

People: AMEN.

### **BENEDICTION**

Those leading the service may greet the newly baptized, the parents, and the sponsors informally. A lighted candle or another gift signifying disciple-ship may be given to each newly baptized person. The minister, sponsors, or others may move through the congregation with the newly baptized and introduce the person(s) as a sign of entry and incorporation into the living community of faith.

Minister: Go in the Peace of Christ.

All: THANKS BE TO GOD.

Those who have participated in the Order for Baptism may return to their places in the congregation.

A Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word continues, omitting the affirmation of faith.

## **ORDER FOR CONFIRMATION: AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM**

### **INVITATION**

After the sermon has been preached, appointed representatives and the pastor may gather in the chancel for confirmation. An elected leader of the church may invite all who have indicated willingness to affirm their baptism by confirmation to come forward, using the following or similar words.

Leader: We invite to come forward the one/those who wish(es) to affirm his/her/their baptism by being confirmed.

The name(s) of the individual(s) may be read, and the candidate(s) may come and stand, if able.

Leader: Friends in Christ, we all are received into the church through the sacrament of baptism. This person has/These people have found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ. Through prayer and study she/he/they has/have been led by the Holy Spirit to affirm her/his/their baptism and to claim in our presence her/ his/their covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the church. He/She/They is/are here for service to Jesus Christ, using the gifts which the Holy Spirit bestows.

### **SENTENCES**

One of the following or other passages from scripture may be read.

(A) Leader: Hear the words of Jesus: I am the vine, you are the branches. Anyone who abides in me, and I in that person, is the one who bears much fruit. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

or

(B) Leader: God's message is near you, on your lips and in your heart, that is, the word of faith that we preach. If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved.

or

(C) Leader: You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are equally citizens with the saints and members of the house-hold of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus alone being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in Christ; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

### QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

These questions parallel the questions asked of candidates for baptism. If there is more than one candidate, they may be asked together and respond in unison.

The first question includes words for candidate(s) being baptized as well as one(s) affirming baptism. With more than one candidate, it may be necessary to address the question using each set of words.

Pastor: (name(s), do you desire to affirm your baptism/be baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

Candidate(s): I DO.

Pastor: Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

Candidate(s): I DO.

Pastor: Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Candidate(s): I DO.

Pastor: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and Word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Candidate(s): I PROMISE, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

Pastor: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

Candidate(s): I PROMISE, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

All who are able may stand. The responses are made in unison by each worshiper, including the candidate(s).

Pastor: Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God.

(A)

Pastor: Do you believe in God?

People: I BELIEVE IN GOD.

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

People: I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST.

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People: I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(B) An ancient baptismal creed, another creed, or a statement of faith may be used in full or the local church covenant may be used in full or in an abbreviated version. The style should allow congregational

response. Forms of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines Statement of Faith, historic creeds, and other affirmations.

The congregation may be seated.

If there is a candidate for baptism, use the Order for Baptism, beginning with the prayer of baptism, following the act of praise. Return to this point of the Order for Confirmation.

If no one is to be baptized, the service continues with the prayer of the candidates which follows.

### **PRAYER OF THE CANDIDATES**

The candidates who are able may stand or kneel.

Pastor and Candidate(s): O God, my God, known to me in Jesus Christ, I give myself to you as your own, to love and serve you faithfully all the days of my life. Amen.

### **PRAYERS OF THE CONGREGATION**

Pastor: Let us pray in silence.

*A period of silent prayer follows.*

Pastor: Let us pray together.

All: Almighty God, who in baptism received these your servants into the church, forgave their sins, and promised them eternal life, increase in them the gifts of your Holy Spirit. Grant love for others, joy in serving you, peace in disagreement, patience in suffering, kindness toward all people, goodness in evil times, faithfulness in temptation, gentleness in the face of opposition, self-control in all things. Thereby strengthen them for their ministry in the world; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

If the Lord's Prayer not to be said elsewhere in the service, it may be said at this time.

### **ACT OF CONFIRMATION**

Parents and baptismal and/or confirmation sponsors, if any, may come forward and stand, if able, near the confirmands. Candidates who are able may kneel. The pastor and other leaders of the local church may place hands upon each candidate individually. One of the following or similar words may be said.

(A) Pastor: (name), the God of peace sanctify you. I pray that you will be preserved blameless to the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Candidate(s) and People: AMEN.

(B) Pastor: (name), the God of mercies multiply grace and peace in you, enable you truly and faithfully to keep your vows, defend you in every time of danger, preserve you to the end, and finally bring you to rest with all the saints in glory everlasting.

Candidate(s) and People: AMEN.

or

(C) Pastor: Strengthen, O God, this, this your servant (name) with your heavenly grace that he/she may continue yours for ever; and daily increase in him/her your Holy Spirit, until you receive him/her at last in your eternal home.

Candidate(s) and People: AMEN.

(D) Pastor: O God, in the grace of Jesus Christ you have accepted this your servant (name) through the water of baptism. Nourish in her/him the power of your Holy Spirit that she/he may serve you in the world.

Candidate(s) and People: AMEN.

## PRAYER OF CONFIRMATION

Pastor: We rejoice, O merciful God, with this person/these people in the gift of the Holy Spirit, and in the Spirit's power to awaken us to new truth and to inspire us to venture into fullness of life.

We give you thanks that she/he/they has/have been moved to affirm her/his/their baptism. Help him/her/them to live not for him-self/herself/themselves but for Christ and those whom Christ loves. Keep her/him/them steady and abounding in hope, never giving up, pressing toward the goal of life with you in Jesus Christ.

Candidate(s) and People: AMEN.

The newly confirmed individual(s) who are able may rise and stand in place.

## ADDRESS

Pastor: By your baptism you were made one with us in the body of Christ, the church. Today we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We celebrate your presence in this household of faith.

## QUESTION ABOUT PARTICIPATION

Pastor: Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world?

Candidate(s): I PROMISE, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

## WELCOME

Members of the local church who are able may stand and say the following or other words of welcome.

Pastor: Let us, the members of (local church), express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

People: We promise you our continuing friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.

## GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

The congregation may be seated. The pastor and representatives of the local church may greet each newly confirmed person individually with these or other words and may offer the hand of Christian love.

Pastor and Representatives: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of (local church) we extend to you the hand of Christian love.

## PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray.

(A) Pastor: Eternal God, we praise you for calling us to be your servant people and for gathering us into the body of Christ. We thank you for sending to us this believer/these believers that we may work together in serving the needs of others.

Confirm in us the power of your covenant that we may live in your Spirit, share regularly in worship, and so love each other that we may have among us the same mind which was in Christ Jesus, to whom be all honor and glory.

All: AMEN.

(B) Pastor: Almighty God and everliving God, may your hand ever be over your servant(s) confirmed today. May your Holy Spirit ever be with her/him/them. So lead him/her/them in the knowledge and



obedience of your Word that he/she/they may serve you in this life and dwell with you in the life to come; through Jesus Christ.

All: AMEN.

(C) Pastor: O God, we praise you for calling us to faith and for gather-ing us into the church, the body of Christ. We thank you for your people gathered in this local church and rejoice that you have increased our community of faith.

Together may we live in the Spirit, building one another up in love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world for the sake of Jesus Christ.

All: AMEN.

## **BENEDICTION**

Pastor: Go in the peace of Christ.

People: THANKS BE TO GOD.

Those who have participated in the Order for Confirmation may return to their places in the congregation.

At the conclusion of this order, a Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word continues, omitting the affirmation of faith.

## **ORDER FOR RECEPTION OF MEMBERS: AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM**

### **INVITATION**

After the sermon has been preached, appointed representatives and the pastor may gather in the chancel. An elected leader of the church may invite all who have indicated willingness to affirm their baptism by joining this local church to come forward, using the following or similar words.

Leader: We invite to come forward the one/those who wish(es) to affirm his/her/their baptism by uniting with us in this household of faith.

The name(s) of the individual(s) may be read and the candidate(s) may come forward and stand, if able. If member(s) are being received from other churches by letter of transfer, that information may be presented.

Leader: Friends in Christ, we all are received into the church through the sacrament of baptism. This person has/These people have found nurture and support in the midst of the family of Christ. Through prayer and study she/he/they has/have been led by the Holy Spirit to affirm his/her/their baptism and to claim in our presence his/ her/their covenantal relationship with Christ and the members of the church. He/She/They is/are here for service to Jesus Christ, using the gifts which the Holy Spirit bestows.

### **SENTENCES**

One of the following or other passages from scripture may be read.

(A) Leader: Hear the words of Jesus: I am the vine, you are the branches. Anyone who abides in me, and I in that person, is the one who bears much fruit. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

or

(B) Leader: God's message is near you, on your lips and in your heart, that is, the word of faith that we preach. If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by our faith that we are put right with God; it is by our confession that we are saved.

or

(C) Leader: You are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are equally citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus alone being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in Christ; in whom you also are built into it for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

### QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

These questions parallel the questions asked of candidates for baptism. If there is more than one candidate, they may be asked together and respond in unison.

The first question includes words for candidate(s) being baptized as well as one(s) affirming baptism. With more than one candidate, it may be necessary to address the question using each set of words.

Pastor: (name(s)), do you desire to affirm your baptism/be baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

Candidate(s): I DO.

Pastor: Do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

Candidate(s): I DO.

Pastor: Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Candidate(s): I DO.

Pastor: Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

Candidate(s): I PROMISE, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

Pastor: Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

Candidate(s): I PROMISE, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

All who are able may stand. The responses are made in unison by each worshiper, including the candidate(s).

Pastor: Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the triune God.

(A)

Pastor: Do you believe in God?

People: I BELIEVE IN GOD.

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

People: I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST.

Pastor: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People: I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT.

(B) An ancient baptismal creed, another creed, or a statement of faith may be used in full or the local church covenant may be used in full or in an abbreviated version. The style should allow

congregational response. Forms of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines Statement of Faith, historic creeds, and other affirmations.

The congregation may be seated.

If there is a candidate for baptism, use the Order for Baptism, beginning with the prayer of baptism, following the act of praise. Return to this point of the Order for Confirmation.

If no one is to be baptized, the service continues here.

#### **ADDRESS**

The following or similar words may be addressed to all people uniting with the church by baptism, reaffirmation or re-profession of faith, or by transfer of certification from other Christian churches.

Pastor: By your baptism you were made one with us in the body of Christ, the church. Today we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community of faith that has been your spiritual home, and we celebrate your presence in this household of faith.

#### **QUESTION ABOUT PARTICIPATION**

Pastor: Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God and enlisting in the work of this local church as it serves this community and the world?

Candidate(s): I PROMISE, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.

#### **WELCOME AND RECEPTION**

Members of the local church who are able may stand and say the following or other words of welcome.

Pastor: Let us, the members of (local church), express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

People: WE WELCOME YOU WITH JOY IN THE COMMON LIFE OF THIS CHURCH. WE PROMISE YOU OUR FRIENDSHIP AND PRAYERS AS WE SHARE THE HOPES AND LABORS OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST. BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT MAY WE CONTINUE TO GROW TOGETHER IN GOD'S KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE AND BE WITNESSES OF OUR RISEN SAVIOR.

#### **GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE**

The congregation may be seated. The pastor and representatives of the local church may greet each new member personally with these or other words and may offer the hand of Christian love.

Pastor and Representatives: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of (local church) we extend to you the hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the company of this local church.

#### **PRAYER**

Pastor: Let us pray.

(A) Pastor: Eternal God, we praise you for calling us to be your servant people and for gathering us into the body of Christ. We thank you for sending to us this believer/these believers that we may work together in serving the needs of others.

Confirm in us the power of your covenant that we may live in your Spirit, share regularly in worship, and so love each other that we may have among us the same mind which was in Christ Jesus, to whom be all honor and glory.

All: AMEN.

(B) Pastor: Almighty God and everliving God, may your hand ever be over your servant(s) who made a commitment to membership here today. May your Holy Spirit ever be with her/ him/them. So

lead her/him/them in the knowledge and obedience of your Word that he/she/they may serve you in this life and dwell with you in the life to come; through Jesus Christ.

All: AMEN.

(C) Pastor: O God, we praise you for calling us to faith and for gathering us into the church, the body of Christ. We thank you for your people gathered in this local church and rejoice that you have increased our community of faith.

Together may we live in the Spirit, building one another up in love, sharing in the life and worship of the church, and serving the world for the sake of Jesus Christ.

All: AMEN.

### **BENEDICTION**

Pastor: Go in the peace of Christ.

People: THANKS BE TO GOD.

Those who have participated in the Order for Confirmation may return to their places in the congregation.

At the conclusion of this order, a Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word continues, omitting the affirmation of faith.

## **ORDER FOR RECONCILIATION OF A PENITENT PERSON**

### **GREETING**

When the person seeking reconciliation arrives, the pastor or another representative of the church may greet the person informally and establish an atmosphere of openness.

Leader: (name), the grace of our Savior Jesus Christ be with you.

Penitent Person: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

(A) Leader: Hear the words of the psalmist: Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; in your great compassion blot out my offenses. Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

(B) Leader: Let us say together these words of the psalmist, Have mercy on me, O God, according to your loving-kindness; in your great compassion blot out my offenses. Wash me through and through from my wickedness, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

### **WORDS OF COMFORT FROM SCRIPTURE**

Scripture may be read as a reminder of God's promise of love and forgiveness. The reading may be shared by those present. One or more of the following or other passages may be read.

Isaiah 53:4-6

Ezekiel 11:19-20

Matthew 6:14-15, 9:12-13, 11:28-30

Luke 6:31-38, 11:91-0, 15:1-7

John 3:16

Colossians 1:3-14, 3:1-17

I Timothy 1:5

I John 1:1-2, 5-10

### **CONFESSION**

A confession may be said by all. After a period of silence, the person seeking reconciliation may be encouraged to make a confession in his or her own words.

#### **GENERAL CONFESSION**

Leader: Let us pray.

(A) All: Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry, and we humbly repent. For the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us that we may delight in your will and follow in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.

(B) All: Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in your likeness and image; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

#### **INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION**

The person seeking reconciliation may confess silent and/or aloud.

#### **PASTORAL CONVERSATION**

The pastor or another representative of the church may encourage dialogue with the person and offer understanding, comfort, counsel, and support.

#### **PRAYER OF THE PENITENT PERSON**

(A) Penitent Person: Almighty God, God of strength and mercy, who sent Jesus to save and forgive, I trust you. Forgive my sins. Refresh my spirit. Free me to love myself, my neighbor, and you. Amen.

(B) Penitent Person: Lord Jesus, have mercy on me, a sinner. Amen. The petition may be repeated several times.

(C) Penitent Person: God, be merciful to me, a sinner. Amen.

#### **ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

The person seeking reconciliation is assured of God's forgiveness with the following or similar words. Agreement about questions to be asked should be reached in advance.

(A) Leader: This is a true saying, and worthy of all to be received, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

This is God's gift to us and to the world, so we can know abundant life.

(B) Leader: If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

(C) Leader: I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity; I said, "I will confess my transgressions to God"; then you forgave the guilt of my sin.

AND

A pastor or another representative of the church may ask the following or a similar question, and the person may respond in this or some other way.

Leader: (name), do you believe the promise of God's forgiveness?

Penitent Person: I BELIEVE

When it seems appropriate, the following question may also be asked.

Leader: Do you forgive those who have sinned against you?

Time may be given for the one seeking reconciliation to reflect and to respond in this or some other way.

Penitent Person: I DO, WITH GOD'S HELP.

The leader may give the declaration of pardon in these or similar words.

Leader: In Christ's name, and as one with you in the church, I declare to you: Your sins are forgiven.  
Go in peace, in the knowledge of God's mercy.

### THANKSGIVING

A pastor or another representative of the church may offer a prayer in her or his own words or may use the brief prayer and/or the acclamation.

(A) Leader: Creator and Savior, giver and forgiver of life, we give you thanks for (name), your son/daughter in faith, who, feeling your presence and trusting your grace, has thrown off the anxiety of sin to receive the hope of your love. We offer our thanks to you, our good and gracious God, in the name of Jesus Christ by whom all sins are forgiven.

Penitent Person: AMEN.

(B) Leader: Now there is rejoicing in heaven; for you were lost, and are found; you were dead, and now you are alive in Jesus Christ. God has put away all your sins.

### PASSING THE PEACE

A pastor or another representative of the church and the one reconciled may greet each other, hold hands, or embrace, and conclude their time together.

Leader: The peace of God be with you always.

Penitent Person: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

## ORDER FOR CORPORATE RECONCILIATION

When this order is used in relation to Holy Communion but on a separate occasion, this order and a Service of Word and Sacrament may be used in full. When it is used on the same occasion as Holy Communion, this order may be used through the affirmation of pardon and a Service of Word and Sacrament may then begin at the offertory.

### GREETING

All who are able may stand. A leader may greet the people with one of these or with other words and then explain briefly the specific purpose of the service.

(A) Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

(B) Leader: In the name of the triune God: Creator, Liberator, and healer. People: AMEN.

### SENTENCES

All who are able may stand. One of the following or other appropriate sentences from scripture may be read.

(A) Leader: Bless the Holy One, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless God's holy name!

People: BLESS THE HOLY ONE, O MY SOUL, AND FORGET NOT ALL GOD'S BENEFITS.

Leader: Who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,

People: WHO REDEEMS YOUR LIFE FROM THE GRAVE, WHO CROWNS YOU WITH STEADFAST LOVE AND MERCY.

Leader: Who satisfies you with good as long as you live,

People: SO THAT YOUR YOUTH IS RENEWED LIKE THE EAGLE'S.

(B) Leader: Jesus said: Ask, and it will be given; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

People: FOR EVERYONE WHO ASK RECEIVES, AND THOSE WHO SEEK FIND, AND TO EACH WHO KNOCKS IT WILL BE OPENED.

## COLLECT

All who are able may stand. One of the following prayers or a similar one may be offered.

Leader: Let us pray.

(A) All: God of ancient wisdom and emerging truth, your love makes all things new. Fill us with the hope, not of those who think they are without sin, but of those who know they have sinned, who trust in your mercy, and who long for your heavenly reign to come on the earth; through Jesus Christ, who lived and died and rose again for us and for our salvation. Amen.

(B) All: God of all mercy and consolation, come to the aid of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit, that we may attend to your word, confess our sins, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ (the one begotten by you before all worlds, our Savior and redeemer. Amen.

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

The people may be seated. One or more of the following may be used. Silent reflection may follow each response.

(A) Leader: Hear the commandments of God: I am the Holy One, your God, who brought you out of bondage. You shall have no other gods but me.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

Leader: You shall not make for yourself any idol.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

Leader: You shall not invoke with malice the name of the Holy one, your God.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

Leader: Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

Leader: Honor your father and your mother.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

Leader: You shall not commit murder.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

Leader: You shall not commit adultery.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

Leader: You shall not steal.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

Leader: You shall not be a false witness.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

Leader: You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

People: GOD, HAVE MERCY ON US AND GUIDE US IN YOUR WAY.

(B) Leader: Jesus said the first commandment is: The Holy One, Our God, is the only Holy One; and you shall love the Holy One, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second commandment is this: You shall love your neighbor as you love yourself. No other commandment is greater than these.

Leader: Let us call to mind the words of Jesus Christ: Blessed are the poor in spirit;  
 People: THEIR IS THE REIGN OF GOD.  
 Leader: Blessed are those who mourn;  
 People: THEY SHALL BE COMFORTED.  
 Leader: Blessed are the meek;  
 People: THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH.  
 Leader: Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness;  
 People: THEY SHALL BE SATISFIED.  
 Leader: Blessed are the merciful;  
 People: THEY SHALL OBTAIN MERCY.  
 Leader: Blessed are the pure in heart;  
 People: THEY SHALL SEE GOD.  
 Leader: Blessed are the peacemakers;  
 People: THEY SHALL BE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD.  
 Leader: Blessed are those persecuted for righteousness' sake;  
 People: THEIRS IS THE REIGN OF GOD.  
 Leader: Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.  
 People: REJOICE AND BE GLAD, FOR YOUR REWARD IS GREAT IN HEAVEN.

### **PRAYER**

The following prayer or a similar one may be offered.

Leader: Let us pray.  
 People: MERCIFUL GOD, FROM WHOM COME ALL HOLY DESIRES AND JUST WORKS, BREATHE INTO OUR HEARTS BY YOUR Holy Spirit THE GIFT OF OBEDIENT FAITH, THAT WE, KNOWING YOUR WILL, MAY TREASURE THESE WORDS IN OUR MINDS AND HEARTS AND MAY IN ALL THINGS LOVE AND SERVE YOU. AMEN.

### **READING OF SCRIPTURE**

The lectionary lessons for the day, one of these suggested sets of lessons, or other appropriate lessons may be read. One or more of these penitential psalms may be said or sung: Psalm 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143. Appropriate lessons include the following.

(A) Ezekiel 11:19-20	(B) Isaiah 1:10-18
Ephesians 5:1-14	Ephesians 4:17-32
Matthew 22:31-40	John 15:12-17

### **SERMON**

A sermon may be offered. A less formal address may be used in which the people are invited to share in dialogue and all present are given an opportunity to offer mutual consolation. There may be silence for reflection.

### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

All who are able may stand for a form of the Statement of Faith of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, a creed, or a church covenant. Forms of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines Statement of Faith, historic creeds, and other affirmations are in the Resource Section.

### **CALL TO CONFESSION**

All who are able may stand. One of the following or other sentences from scripture may be said in preparation for the prayers of confession.

(A) Leader: When I declared not my sin, my body wasted away through my groaning all day long.  
 People: FOR DAY AND NIGHT YOUR HAND WAS HEAVY UPON ME; MY STRENGTH WAS DRIED UP AS BY THE HEAT OF THE SUMMER.



Leader: I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not hide my iniquity;  
 People: I SAID: "I WILL CONFESS MY TRANSGRESSIONS TO GOD"; THEN YOU FORGAVE THE GUILT OF MY SIN.

(B) Leader: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.  
 People: IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, GOD IS FAITHFUL AND JUST AND WILL FORGIVE OUR SINS AND CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

(C) Leader: Since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the only one begotten by God,  
 People: LET US THEN WITH CONFIDENCE DRAW NEAR TO THE THRONE OF GRACE, THAT WE MAY RECEIVE MERCY AND FIND GRACE TO HELP IN TIME OF NEED.

### CONFESSION OF SIN

The people may sit or those who are able may kneel. All may join in one of these prayers or a general confession prepared for the occasion. A special litany may be used responsively or antiphonally. A litany may be read twice, giving each half of the congregation opportunity to make confession and receive the promise of forgiveness.

Leader: Let us confess our sins.

(A) All: Gracious God, our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and grant us grace to grow more and more in our likeness and image; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

(B) All: Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry, and we humbly repent. For the sake of our Savior Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us that we may delight in your will and follow in your ways, to the glory of your name. Amen.

(C) All: Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin. Create in us a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within us. Cast us not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from us. Restore to us the joy of your salvation, and uphold us with a willing spirit. Amen.

### SILENCE

Time may be given for individuals to confess specific sin silently:

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

In these or similar words, a leader and all present assure each other of God's mercy and pardon.

(A) Leader: While we were yet helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.  
 People: GOD'S LOVE FOR US IS SHOWN IN THIS: WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.

(B) Leader: Jesus said: Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads.  
 People: AND I WILL GIVE YOU REST.  
 Leader: Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me,  
 People: BECAUSE I AM GENTLE AND HUMBLE IN SPIRIT; AND YOU WILL FIND REST.  
 Leader: For the yoke I will give you is easy,  
 People: AND THE LOAD I WILL PUT ON YOU IS LIGHT.

(C) Leader: Jesus said to a sinner: Where are your accusers? Has no one condemned you?  
 People: NEITHER DO I CONDEMN YOU; GO, AND DO NOT SIN AGAIN.

### AFFIRMATION OF PARDON

All who are able may stand as a leader asks these or similar questions to the congregation as individuals.

Leader: Do you believe that God is willing, for Christ's sake, to forgive all your sins?  
People: I BELIEVE.  
Leader: Do you forgive those who have sinned against you?  
People: I DO, WITH THE HELP OF GOD.  
Leader: Do you resolve to offer yourself to the guidance of the Holy Spirit that you may have the power to resist evil and to do what is good?  
People: I DO  
Leader: In Christ's name, and as one with you in the church, I declare to you: Your sins are forgiven.  
People: IN CHRIST'S NAME, AND AS SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN THE CHURCH, WE DECLARE TO YOU: YOUR SINS ARE FORGIVEN.  
All: THANKS BE TO GOD.

If Holy Communion is to be celebrated, a Service of Word and Sacrament follows, beginning with the offertory. If Holy Communion is not to be celebrated on this occasion, this order continues.

### **PRAYERS**

Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession may be offered by leaders and the people.

### **COLLECT**

Leader: Let us pray.  
All: O GOD, FROM WHOM COME ALL HOLY DESIRES, ALL GOOD COUNSELS, AND ALL JUST WORKS; GIVE TO US, YOUR SERVANTS, TRI-AT PEACE WHICH THE WORLD CANNOT GIVE THAT OUR HEARTS MAY BE SET TO OBEY YOUR COMMANDMENTS; AND THAT WE, BEING DE-FENDED FROM THE FEAR OF OUR ENEMIES, MAY LIVE IN PEACE AND QUIETNESS; THROUGH THE INTERCES-SION OF JESUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOR, WHO LIVES AND REIGNS WITH YOU AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD FOR EVER. AMEN.

### **PASSING THE PEACE**

As a sign of the reconciliation with God and each other, all may greet those around them with an embrace or handshake, accompanied by such words as: The peace of God be with you," and the response: And also with you." Leaders may move among the congregation to share the signs of peace.

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

If this prayer is not incorporated elsewhere in the service, it may be said here.

### **ACT OF PRAISE**

A gloria, doxology, or hymn of praise may be sung.

### **BENEDICTION**

(A) Leader: Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast to that which is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor all people; love and serve God, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.  
People: THANKS BE TO GOD.  
(B) Leader: Hear the promise of Jesus Christ: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. The grace of Jesus Christ be with you all.  
People: AMEN.

## A LITURGY FOR THE DEDICATION OF AN INFANT (INFANTS)

### ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION

Brothers and sisters, we are gathered together in this Dedication Service, first, to give thanks to God for this gift of a new life given to us in trust; second, to dedicate this child (these children) to God so that when s/he is (they are) grown, s/he will give herself/himself (their selves) in service to others, just as Jesus did; third, to promise to help this child (these children) grow in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and fellow human beings; and fourth, to name this child (these children), thus recognizing her/ him (them) as unique person/s and member/s of the family of God.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

Jesus said: "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me. See that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you that in heaven their angels always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven. So, it is not the will of my Father, who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." (Matthew 18:6, 10, 14)

or

Jesus... said to them, "Let the children come to me; do not try to stop them; for the reign of God belongs to such as these. I tell you, whosoever does not accept the Reign of God like a child shall never enter it." And he put his arms around them, laid his hands upon them, and blessed them. (Mark 10:13-16).

### CHARGE TO PARENTS (AND SPONSORS; IF ANY)

You know that the child's first concepts and understanding of God come from you. Do you then promise to grow in faith so that you may properly guide and instruct this child (these children) in the love and understanding of God?

Response: WE DO PROMISE. **CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION**

Do you, as members of the church, acknowledge the preciousness of this child (these children) of God set before you and promise to so lead your lives that this child (these children) may come to know and acknowledge Jesus Christ, the Lord of your lives? Please rise in affirmation.

Congregation (standing): WE DO ACKNOWLEDGE AND WE PROMISE.

**PRAYER OF PRESENTATION** *(by the Minister taking the child in his arms or allowing the parents to hold up the children)*

BLESS, O Lord, this child (these children) whom we this day call by name, recognizing her/him (them) as your child (children) and here dedicate to your love and care. Cause your Holy Spirit to descend upon her/him (them) that s/he (they) grow in mind and body, loving you and her/his (their) fellow human beings. Bless her/his (their) parents and friends that they may grow in grace and in their faith so that they may be true examples for this child (these children). Through Jesus Christ. Amen.

**PRAYER OF PRESENTATION** *(by a parent)*

WE thank you, O Lord, for this our child (these our children) whom we today dedicate to you. Grant her/him (them) your blessings and attend her/him (them) with your presence that s/he (they) may grow up to love whatsoever things are true, and pure, and lovely, and of good report. Grant to us, her/his (their) parents understanding and selfless devotion that we may be faithful in fulfilling the promises we have made before You this day. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**ACT OF DEDICATION** *(The Minister shall hold the child (children one after the other or shall her/his right hand over her/his head and say)*

\_\_\_\_\_, may the God of peace, make you holy in every part, and keep you sound in spirit, soul and body. Amen (I Thess. 5:23a)

May the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be and abide with you, now and always. Amen.

or

The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace; Amen.

### **ACT OF THANKSGIVING**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving** (*by a parent/parents.*)

O GOD, OUR CREATOR AND SUSTAINER OF LIFE, WE GIVE YOLT THANKS FOR THIS WONDER OF A CHILD (CHILDREN) WHOM YOU HAVE GIVEN TO US TO LOVE AND CARE FOR.

WE BLESS YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY YOU HAVE GIVEN TO US OF BRINGING HER/HIM UP (THEM) IN SAFETY THROUGH CHILDHOOD'S DANGERS; AND OF THE PRIVILEGE OF HELPING HER/HIM (THEM) TO GROW TO ADULTHOOD, AND DO GOOD WORK AND WITNESS FOR YOU. THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

### **PRESENTATION TO THE CONGREGATION**

The child [children] and parents/sponsors face the congregation.

Brothers and sisters, we have this day dedicated to the Lord our God this child (these children) \_\_\_\_\_, and we rejoice with the parents, \_\_\_\_\_, for this gift of a child (children) in their family (families). See that in all you say and do you lead and teach this child (these children) the truths and responsibilities of Christians, that through prayer, precept and example, you help bring her/him (them) in the love and care of the Lord.

or

HEAR, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your hear, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I command you this day shall be upon your hears; and you shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. (Deut: 6:4-7)

### **BLESSING**

Go into God's abundance and tell the story of a Christ who would claim each person as a child. Go and laugh in the fields of God, for you are inheritors of God's grace and love. Amen.

*Weenes, Reaching for the Rainbows Pa,  
The Westminster Press, 1980*

or

May the Spirit of God fill you with love, joy, hope and peace. Amen.

*Thankful Praise*

## **LITURGY FOR DEDICATION OF CHILDREN I**

The following are important parts to be considered in a Dedication Service of an Infant (infants):

### **ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION**

Here is explained the meaning of the event and the biblical basis are read which may include the above-mentioned texts and/or Matthew 18:6, 10, 14 or Mark 8:36-37. The child (children) to be dedicated together with parents and sponsors are then called forward.

### **CHARGE TO THE PARENTS (AND SPONSORS, IF ANY) AND CONGREGATION**

These are vows made by the parents, sponsors (if any), and the congregation for the care and guidance of the child (children) to be dedicated to the Lord.

### **WORDS OR PRAYER OF PRESENTATION**

These are made by the Minister or one of the parents acknowledging God's claim on the child (children) and their trusteeship of her/his life (their lives); and their vows to help the child (children) grow in stature, in wisdom, and in favor with God and men/(women).

#### **ACT OF DEDICATION**

Here the Minister may take the child in her/his arms, if an infant; then s/he lifts her/his right hand over the child's head; or one of the parents may hold the child as the blessing is pronounced.

#### **ACT OF THANKSGIVING**

Here a prayer of thanksgiving may be given by a parent; or by the minister for the parent; or a hymn of thanksgiving may be sung.

#### **PRESENTATION TO THE CONGREGATION**

After the act of dedication is completed, the child (children) and her/ his (their) parents and sponsors are requested to face the congregation and the minister presents them to the congregation.

### **LITURGY FOR DEDICATION OF CHILDREN II**

(The service should ordinarily be a part of Sunday morning worship, and may follow the Scripture Lesson or the Hymn after the Sermon.)

The parents and Baby accompanied, if possible, by all the other members of the family, relatives, and friends, sit before the Lord's Table.

If desired, the service may begin with a dedication or other suitable hymn.

Addressing the Congregation, the Minister shall say:

*We welcome in the name of the Lord, Mr. and Mrs. (name) and their baby son/daughter (name).*

In this service of Dedication we are firstly to give thanks to God, the Maker of all things, the Giver of all life, for the creation and the birth of this child.

Secondly, we are to make a solemn promise as parents and as a church that, relying on God's help and working in partnership together, we will endeavor to bring up this child in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Thirdly, we are to pray that God's blessing may descend and rest upon this child, remembering how the Lord Jesus took little children in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

Let us now hear the word of God.

The Minister shall then read a selection of the following Scriptures

Deuteronomy 6:47

Psalms 127:1,3

Psalms 103:17-18

Matthew 18:5, 10, 14

Mark 8:36-37

Ephesians 6:1-4

The Minister shall conclude the Scripture readings with the following:

And they were bringing children to him, that he might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, he was indignant, and said to them. "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of God. Truly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it." And He took them up in His arms and blessed them, laying His hands upon them. (Mark 10:13-16)

The following passages are also suitable. Matthew 18:1-4; 19:13-15; Luke 9:46-48; 18:15-17; Colossians 3:20-21.

May God bless to us these readings from His Holy Word. Let us now give thanks.

*O God our Heavenly Parent, Maker of all things, Orator of all life, we praise Your glorious Name that You have been pleased to bless these Your servants with the gift of a child, whereby You have filled their hearts with joy and gladness. Accept our gratitude and thanksgiving, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

The parents shall stand and, addressing them, the Minister shall say:

In presenting this child to the Lord, do you promise in dependence on divine grace, and partnership with the church, to teach your child the truths and duties of the Christian faith; and by prayer, precept, and instruction of the Lord?

The parents shall reply:

*Yes, we do promise, God guiding us.*

## PASSAGE RITES

Addressing the Congregation, the Minister shall say:

*Do you as members of the Church acknowledge and accept the responsibility together with the parents, of teaching and training this child, that being brought up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, s/he may be led in due time to trust Christ as Saviour, and confessing him as Lord in baptism, be made a member of his Church? if so, will you signify your acceptance to this responsibility by standing?*

Those who are able in the congregation shall then stand. Taking the child into her/his arms, and laying her/his right hand on the child's head, the Minister shall pronounce the child's name and say:)

*The Lord bless you and keep you: the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.*

Returning the child to the parents, the Minister shall say:

Let us pray for this child.

*O God most loving and holy, we pray that Your Holy Spirit may rest upon this child and dwell in her/him for ever. Keep her/him, we ask You, under Your loving care and protection; guide her/him and sanctify her/him both in body and soul. Grant that s/he may grow in wisdom as in stature, and in favour with God and people. Abundantly enrich her/him with Your heavenly grace; bring her/him safely through the due time to witness a good confession, and to persevere therein to the end: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Let us pray for the parents.

*Almighty God, our heavenly Parent, whose beloved Son did share in Nazareth the life of an earthly home; bless, we beseech thee, the home of this child, and grant wisdom and understanding to her/his parents, and to all who shall have the care of her/him, that s/he may grow up in steadfast love and reverence of Your Holy name: through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Here the Minister may present the Parents with a Bible or New Testament for the child. The Minister or other representative of the Church may enter the name of the child on the Church Cradle Roll. A Hymn may follow, after which the Morning worship may be continued, or concluded with the Benediction.

*Orders and Prayers for Church Worship, Landers:  
The Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland, 1960. pp. 163-167.*

## LITURGY FOR CONFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

At the designated time in the order of the worship, the minister shall call the candidates for confirmation to come forward. The candidates shall face the minister.

Minister: *Addressing the congregation*

Dearly beloved, we are now to receive into full membership of the church, through this service of confirmation, these persons about to be named. They have received instruction in the teaching of the church and have been examined and approved for admission to full communion with the church by the Board of Elders. They are now ready to confess their faith in Christ, into which they were baptized.

Will the following persons please come forward as I call your names? And will their parents or guardians come forward with them. I also call on the Church Elders to come forward now.

*Addressing the Candidates*

Beloved in the Lord, when you were baptized, you were, through your parents, brought to Jesus Christ and God claimed you as his own and you were received into the churches. You now come to confirm what was done in baptism: to confess before this congregation the faith in the Lord Jesus which your parents expressed on your behalf, and you now offer yourselves to God as willing servants. You wish now also to seek to covenant with us in membership of this church and of the whole church of God and enter into the privileges and the duties of Church membership.

Let us now hear from you your declaration of your faith and your intention.

### AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Here the candidates may read together their written statement of belief. In the absence of such, the Apostle's Creed or Nicene Creed or any contemporary creed may be read.

### AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISMAL VOWS

Question: *Addressing the Candidates*

Do you confess with us your faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord; and do you promise, relying on God's grace, to follow Christ and serve him all your life in the fellowship of the church?

Answer: I DO

Question: *Addressing the Candidates*

Now desiring to be received to the Lord's Supper, do you promise to give attention to Christian teachings, to share with us in the duties of membership in this church, in worship and in meeting, in giving your substance, in service and to submit to the lawful authority and guidance of the church?

Answer: I DO

*Let Us Pray'*

Almighty and eternal God, who has by your spirit brought these your children openly to confess their faith in Jesus Christ, strengthen them and daily increase in them your meaningful gifts of grace; the spirit of wisdom, and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord; now and forever. Amen.

*Addressing the Parents/Guardians*

Friends, as parents and guardians of these persons who are about to be confirmed, you have earned the right to place your hands on them as a symbol of your love and concern for their continued growth and nurture in

the Lord, and thus together with the church elders and ministers, you enter into a partnership with the church in guiding your children in the fellowship and mission of Christ's Church. Let us now attend to the act of confirmation.

*Minister, elders, parents/guardians lay their hands on the heads or shoulders of the candidates; candidates kneel.*

Minister: The Lord defend you with his heavenly grace and by his spirit confirm you in the faith and fellowship of all true disciples of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Ministers/Elders: We extend to you now the right hand of fellowship. We welcome you to the community Christ's followers. (Shaking each one's hands; present bibles or other gifts.)

*Candidates and parents/guardians face the congregation*

Minister addressing the congregation

Brothers and Sisters, I commend to your love and care these persons whom we this day receive into the membership of this congregation. Do all in your power to increase their faith, confirm their hope, and perfect them in love. Amen.

## **BLESSING**

Minister: Go forth in peace and be of good courage; hold fast that which is good, rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Candidates/parents/guardians return to seats*

## **ACCEPTANCE ON CONFESSION OF FAITH**

### **THE SERVICE FOR THE ACCEPTANCE AS CHURCH MEMBERS**

Minister: My friends, we are about to receive new recruits into God's company. God has called them and, with joy we now place on them the sign of Jesus Christ. In accepting them into our fellowship we announce that they become a part of God's family. We celebrate God's calling, cleansing and empowering them for new life, "measured by nothing less than the full of stature of Christ." We receive them into our fellowship for they themselves have already been baptized in the name of the same Lord, who introduced us into the company of Christians on earth.

*Let us now hear from them their declaration of their faith.*

### **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

*The candidate reads her/his own statement of belief— as her/his confession of faith*

### **DECLARATION OF FAITH AND VOWS**

Question: Do you confess your own faith in Jesus Christ and desire to belong the company of God's people?

Answer: I DO

Question: Do you promise with God's help to live as disciples of Jesus Christ, faithfully living and working for the good of all people?

Answer: I DO

The church council shall come forward and surround the candidate as they lay their hands on the candidate who is kneeling down.

### **THE ACT OF CONFIRMATION**

Minister: What is your given name: \_\_\_\_\_ (The name is given.)



Minister: (with right hand on the confirmand's head) (Name), in the name of God, our Parent, the Son and the Holy Spirit I receive you as a full member of this church. And now, may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, descend upon you to sustain and guide you through all your days. Amen.

## **RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP**

*Minister, elders, parents extend their right hand to the candidate*

## **TRANSFER OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

### **THE SERVICE FOR TRANSFER OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

Minister: Let those persons who are members of other communion in Christ's Holy church, and who now desire to enter into fellowship with this congregation, present themselves to be received into membership of this church. (names are called)

*Those who have been called stand in front of the minister.*

### **CONFESSION OF FAITH**

Minister: It is fitting that, as you are received into the fellowship of this church, you profess again publicly that faith into which you were confirmed and baptized. Do you here, in solemn promise and vow, such as you made at your confirmation, confess Jesus Christ as the Master of your life and pledge your faithfulness to Christ's discipleship through the fellowship of the church?

Response: I DO

### **LITANY OF TRANSFER OF MEMBERSHIP**

Ministers: The church is a family of people with varieties of gifts, united by the spirit revealed in Jesus of Nazareth.

People: IT IS A SPIRIT OF CARING FOR ONE ANOTHER, OF FORGIVING, OF HELPING EACH OTHER, OF LOVE REVEALED IN THE LIFE OF DEATH OF JESUS.

New Members: We want to share in that Spirit!

Minister: The Church is the people of God, with a diversity of needs, ideas and visions, inspired by the spirit burning through the words and deeds of Jesus as recorded in scriptures (Luke 4:1,1-20 May that same Spirit rest upon us all.

People: IT IS THE SPIRIT OF OPENNESS TO THE WORLD AND TO ALL PEOPLE AS OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, OF CON-TINUAL SEARCHING AND LEARNING OF SAYING, "WE BELIEVE, HELP OUR UNBELIEF." IT IS SETTING TOWARD GROWTH AND RENEWAL THAT TAKES MANY FORMS.

New Members: We want to share in that Spirit!

Minister: The Spirit of the Christ calls us into a life of servanthood and suffering.

People: THE SUFFERING SERVANT IS ONE WHO IS DESPISED AND REJECTED, A PERSON OF SORROWS AND WELL AC-QUAINTED WITH GRIEF. THE SUFFERING BEARS THE GRIEF AND SORROWS OF OTHERS, AND SUFFERING BRING WHOLENESS.

New Members: We want to share in that Spirit!

Minister: The Spirit of the Christ which was present with Jesus is the Spirit of Exodus — the spirit that opts for liberation.

People: THE CRIES OF THE BRICK-MAKERS IN EGYPT AND THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE BEEN HEARD BY THE GOD OF EXODUS.

New Members: We want to share in that Spirit!

Minister: The Spirit of the Christ which was present with Jesus is the spirit of covenant formation, of community building.

People: WE STAND AT THE END OF THE CLOUD OF WITNESSES THAT INCLUDE ABRAHAM AND SARAH, MIRIAM AND MOSES, ESTHER AND DAVID, JOB'S DAUGHTERS AND THE SONS OF THE PROPHETS, MARTHA AND JESUS, AND BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN OUR MIDST WHO STAND OPEN TO THE SPIRIT'S BIDDING.

New Members: We want to share in that Spirit!

Minister: The Spirit of the Christ is also the Ruler of Creation.

People: THE SPIRIT THAT WAS THE CREATIVE BROODING PRESENCE IN THE MIDST OF THE WATERS OF CHAOS IS STILL MOVING IN OUR MIDST AND IN THE MIDST OF THE ONGOING CREATION OF THE WORLD TO BRING ORDER OUT OF CHAOS, UNITY IN THE MIDST OF DISUNITY, LIFE IN THE MIDST OF DEATH.

New Members: We want to share in that Spirit!

Minister: *The new member face the congregation*

I present these persons to this community of faith in the hope that the Spirit of Christ might rest upon each of them and all of us together. May the Spirit of the resurrected Christ make us into that body which is of it.

#### **SIGNING OF THE CERTIFICATE OF TRANSFER**

#### **BLESSING**

Minister: May God be within us to refresh us, around us to protect us, before us to guide us, and above us to bless us, now and in the days to come. Amen.

People: AMEN.

*The newly received members may return to their seats. The congregation may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means.*

## **THE WEDDING RITE OF MARRIAGE SERVICE**

#### **ORDER OF ENGAGEMENT FOR MARRIAGE**

The practice of celebrating engagement rituals is not widespread. For those who feel that this is an important step in their lives and ought to be celebrated publicly, a number of courtship and pre-marital customs practiced by the early Filipinos may be worth reviving. For instance, in most dancing and feasting and poetry usually accompanied negotiations between the two families concerned. The concept of extending family ties is underlined by the important part played by the families involved during the betrothal. Furthermore, the use of a trusted or respected friend to serve as spokesperson or "go-between" indicates community participation and concern. Finally, the prospective groom presents a token or guarantee of good faith — often a ring of precious metal — to the woman to seal the engagement to marry; this is in place of the usual bridal price or dowry. Words of promise are spoken between them in the presence of families. Feasting then follows.

The engagement period provides an opportunity for the couple contemplating marriage to test whether or not they are compatible. Being a step prior to the marriage it ought to be entered into seriously and prayerfully.

The following suggested order for an Engagement Rite is climaxed by a love feast" attended by members of both families and close friends.

### **AN ORDER OF AN ENGAGEMENT RITE**

#### **THE PREPARATION**

The representative of the suitor stands with the suitor himself and his family at the entrance and, in verse proceeds to beg permission to enter. The spokesperson for the woman replies also in verse with an invitation for them to come in and join them.

#### **OPENING MUSIC**

This is a gay, festive music which turns to soft, quiet music as the man and his party enter and find seats in the community; the man finds his place beside the woman.

#### **SONG OF PRAISE TO GOD**

#### **CALL TO CELEBRATION**

Leader: Know that the Lord is God: It is the Lord that made us, and not we ourselves; we are God's people, and the sheep of the Lord's pasture. (Psalm 100:3)

The God who made the world and everything in it... (Acts 17:24a) gives the desolate a home to live in. (Psalm 68:6)

Let us worship the Lord our God, "and all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Genesis 28:14)

#### **INVOCATION**

Leader/Head of Host Family/All:

*O loving GOD, we thank you that you have drawn two heads to one another. May it be that as they go on together to discover the mysteries of their emerging love, they will be found unfailing in spiritual sensitiveness, keen to sense the moral meanings of life, intellectually eager and resolute in courage. And if it be your will to protect and establish this which has begun within them, may their love be but another witness to the beauty and the wonder of the way you have planned these lives of ours. Amen.*

Scripture Readings (Genesis 29:20 and I Cor. 13)

#### **PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

Here, again, representatives or spokesperson for both parties may have their debate ("balagtasan") or the exaltation of the ideal in love or faithfulness and constancy in love or marriage. In the absence of such poetic presentation, the minister may preach a sermon or give a meditation on the same theme.

#### **THE OFFERING**

The Offering of Dance

The "balitaw" may be presented here, if possible, by the man and the woman or their representatives.

An Offering of Song

By a special group, a soloist, or an instrumentalist.

The Offering of Food

Food to be shared is brought in at this time, uncovered.

The Blessing of the Food

The betrothed:

We give You thanks, O God, for all this bounty with which You nourish us, symbolic of Your love and care for us. We praise You for all who are present here today, whose company and concern nourish our spiritual lives, symbolic of Your manner of ministering to us and our needs. May we be worthy recipients of all these blessings. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **THE LOVE FEAST OR BANQUET**

Everyone will proceed normally through the meal. The meal may be made more festive with some songs or musical renditions by a small group which will simulate a serenade or "harana".

### **THE PRESENTATION OF THE TOKEN OF LOVE**

Before the meal comes to a complete end, the leader or the representative of the man shall announce the presentation of a token of engagement, usually a ring, accompanied by promises of faithfulness and growing love, if possible, in verse. It would be more meaningful if the man to be engaged could say these words of promise, with the woman responding with her own promises.

### **A SONG OF LOVE OR FELLOWSHIP (by all)**

### **BENEDICTION**

### **EXIT MUSIC AND HANDCLASP OF PEACE**

As the exit music is played, family and friends shake each other's hands as they wish each other well, pronouncing God's peace on one another and especially on the newly engaged couple.

## **ORDER OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE I**

### **Unique characteristics in this ceremony:**

This service begins with a brief meditation on marriage. The scripture lesson from I Corinthians, the thirteenth chapter, is in modern language.

The exchanging of the vows and rings are blended together into one act. The vows are intimate and meaningful, and the rings truly become a symbol of the vows exchanged.

The Marriage Service of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.

In the name of God our Maker and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

*Congregation may be seated.*

On this occasion \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ come before family, friends, and the church to affirm the choice that they have made of each other as life's mates and their intention to establish a home for the raising of a family and the fulfillment of life together.

As the years go by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, you will realize that this marriage you have chosen for yourselves was not given to you by anyone else. It has been, and must continue to be, a process that builds throughout your lives. You must work at marriage day by day ... meeting the disappointments, as well as the joys, that your lives together will bring. We have gathered this afternoon with you, to help you give added strength to this marriage. But, in doing this, we realize that this outward act of the marriage service is but a symbol of that which is inward and real; a union of two people ... which God blesses in the church, and the state makes legal. Marriage is a union by your own free choice ... with the full knowledge of what that choice means ... when two people give themselves to each other ... in love for the rest of their lives.

The quality of love that is necessary for marriage been described for us by St. Paul in the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians:

I may speak in tongues of men or of angels, but if I am without love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal. I may have the gift of prophecy, and know every hidden truth: I may have faith strong enough to

move mountains: But if I have love, I am nothing, I may dole out all I possess, or even give my body to be burned, but if I have no love, I am none the better.

Love is patient: Love is kind and envies no one. Love is never boastful, nor conceited, nor rude: Never selfish, not quick to take offence. Love keeps no score of wrongs: Does not gloat over other's sins, but delights in the truth. There is nothing love cannot face: There is no limit to its faith, its hope, and its endurance.

Love never ends ... are there prophets? Their work will be over. Are there outbursts of ecstasy? They will cease. Is there knowledge? It will vanish: For our knowledge and our prophecy are but partial, and the partial vanishes when wholeness comes. When I was a child, my speech, my outlook, and my thoughts were all childish. Then I grew up and I had finished with childish things. Now we see only puzzling reflections in a mirror, but then we shall see face to face. In a word ... there are three things that last forever: Faith, Hope, and Love, but the greatest of them all is love.

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

And are you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, now ready in the presence of your family and friends to declare your intention to make this venture of faith and love in marriage?

\_\_\_\_\_, are you willing to receive \_\_\_\_\_ as your wife having confidence that your abiding faith and love in each other will last forever? (Answer: I am)

\_\_\_\_\_, are you willing to receive \_\_\_\_\_ as your husband, having confidence that your abiding faith and love in each other will last forever? (Answer: I am)

## **TO THE ALTAR**

### **LET US PRAY**

Heavenly God, who has endowed us with creative ability in love, we present to you and for your blessing upon their marriage. May you endow their union with true devotion, spiritual commitment, and personal integrity.

Eternal God, give and the grace to keep the bond of union between them. When selfishness shows itself, grant generosity; when mistrust is a temptation, give moral strength; where misunderstanding intrudes, give patience and gentleness. When suffering becomes their lot, give them a strong faith and abiding hope. In Christ's Name. Amen.

Marriage requires much generosity ... unselfishness ... flexibility ... and forbearance from both husband and wife. The reality and happiness of your marriage depends upon the inner experience of your heart and the integrity of your commitment.

### **RINGS**

As a seal of your promise, you have chosen rings of precious metal, symbolizing the unity, wholeness and endlessness of your life together.

Will you, \_\_\_\_\_, place this ring upon the wedding finger of your bride and say your promise to her.

"I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be the wife of all my days. To be the mother of our children, to be the companion of our home. We shall keep together what share of sorrow our lives may lay upon us. And we shall hold together our store of goodness and of love. Take this ring, freely given, as a token of my love and a symbol of my intention to live with you in love and respect. As this ring has no end, neither shall my love for you."

Will you, \_\_\_\_\_, place this ring upon the wedding finger of your groom and say your promise to him.

"I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you, \_\_\_\_\_, to be the husband of all my days. To be the father of our children, to be the companion of our home. We shall keep together what share of sorrow our lives may lay upon us. And we shall hold together our store of goodness and of love. Take this ring, freely given, as a token of my love and a symbol of my intention to live with you in love and respect. As this ring has no end, neither shall my love for you."

And now symbolic of the fact that your two lives have become one, light the wedding candle.

### JOIN RIGHT HANDS

Since you, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, have consented together to be married and have witnessed the same before God and this community of relatives and friends and have committed your love and faith to each other and have sealed your promises with rings, I announce that God has made you husband and wife, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. What God has joined together, let no one put asunder. Amen.

*Kneeling if able.*

### BLESSING

The Lord God, who created our first parents and established their union in marriage, establish, sustain and bless you, that you may find delight in each other and grow in holy love until your life's end. Amen.

Let us pray:

Father of love, shower your grace upon \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ who have come before you and pledged themselves to live together in holy marriage. Give them wisdom and devotion in the ordering of their common life, that each may be to the other a strength in need ... a counselor in perplexity ... a comfort in sorrow ... and a companion in joy. Give them such fulfillment of their mutual affection that they may reach out in love and concern for others. Grant that all married persons who have witnessed these vows may find their lives strengthened and their loyalties confirmed. In Christ's Name. Amen.

### BENEDICTION

May God, Son Jesus Christ, and Holy Spirit direct and keep you in trust and love all the days of your life. Amen.

Arise and kiss the bride.

I introduce to you for the first time: Mr. and Mrs.

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means.

## ORDER OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE II

### Unique characteristics in this ceremony:

The statement of intention in this service is shortened and emphasizes the couple's love for and faith in each other. The response is "I Am," instead of "Do," or "I Will."

Following the exchange of vows and rings, and before the pronouncement of marriage, there is included the writing of Kahlil Gibran, from **The Prophet**, which speaks of the marriage partner's individuality in their union.

The marriage service of and on \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

### CALL TO WORSHIP:

In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen *Congregation may be seated.*

Tonight, the family and friends of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have come to witness their union in marriage and to ask for God's blessings on the lives that they wish to share.

Let us pray:

O God, who alone unites persons in holy bonds of covenant, without whose spirit there is no abiding unity, be present in the inner being of these who have come to witness their promise to each other — in the Spirit of Christ, the Lord. Amen.

## DECLARATION OF INTENTION

The resourcefulness of Christian love has been declared by the Apostle Paul in these unforgettable words: Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things. All else may pass away but love never ends. (I Corinthians 13)

Love enriches each part of life and marriage enriches love. Marriage should be a union of two individuals; a decision to share two lives in the kind of Christian love described by Apostle Paul.

Two lives, shared, can hold more fulfillment and happiness than either life alone, but a commitment to each sharing requires great love and faith.

\_\_\_\_\_, are you ready to enter into marriage with \_\_\_\_\_, believing that the love you share and your faith in each other will endure all things?

Groom: I am.

\_\_\_\_\_, are you ready to enter into marriage with \_\_\_\_\_, believing that the love you share and your faith in each other will endure all things?

Bride: I am.

## SYMBOLIC APPROVAL

Who will bless this marriage in behalf of the families and friends of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_?

Father: \_\_\_\_\_ mother and I.

*(To altar)*

## PRAYER

Let us pray.

Out of this tangled world, O God, you have drawn together these two people and are binding them firmly by the sure insights of love. We thank you for the homes in which and have lived, for parents who have supported them and encouraged them even in the most trying times and who have sacrificed in their behalf and made great opportunities possible. We also thank you for the friendships they have enjoyed and for the church which has awakened them to the meaning of eternal life.

Our God, bless these as they come before family, friends, and church to affirm the choice that they have made of each other. As we share with them in the celebration of love on this occasion, may we all grow toward the perfection that is experienced in your love. We pray in the spirit of the love of Christ. Amen.

## VOWS

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, will you join your right hands, face each other and repeat individually after me:

(Groom) \_\_\_\_\_, I take you to be my wife, from this moment on. I vow to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, to respect and to cherish, and to work with you to achieve the goals and dreams of our lives.

(Bride) \_\_\_\_\_, I take you to be my wife, from this moment on. I vow to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, to respect and to cherish, and to work with you to achieve the goals and dreams of our lives.

## EXCHANGE OF RINGS

Minister: These rings are a symbol of wedded love. As often as either of you see them, you will be reminded of this high moment and the endless love you promise.

**Addressing the Groom**

Take this ring and place it on \_\_\_\_\_ finger and repeat: This ring, I give to you, in token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love.

#### **Addressing the Bride**

Take this ring and place it on \_\_\_\_\_ finger and repeat: This ring, I give to you, in token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love.

*Light unity candle, then kneel.*

#### **READING**

You were born together and together you shall be forevermore.  
You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.

Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God.  
But let there be spaces in your togetherness,  
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.

Love one another but make not a bond of love:  
Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls.  
Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup.  
Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf.  
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone.  
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.  
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.  
And stand together yet not too near together.  
For the pillars of the temple stand apart.  
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.\*

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT OF MARRIAGE**

*The couple should join their right bands.*

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, since you have promised your love to each other and before God and these witnesses have exchanged these solemn vows, and these symbols of genuine and undying love, I announce that God has made you husband and wife.

Now may God's joy which the world cannot give, and which the world cannot take away, be yours today and tomorrow and in all of life's tomorrows. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

#### **Kiss the bride!**

At the end of the ceremony, the congregation may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means.

### **ORDER OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE III**

#### **Unique characteristics in this ceremony:**

This service is relatively simple, incorporating all the parts of a traditional service. While omitting any Scripture lesson, the tone of the wedding service is, of course, biblically oriented. The ritual blends the exchanging of the vows, with the exchange of the rings and the declaration of marriage is at the end, just before the benediction.

The marriage service of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_.

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**



In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen  
*Congregation may be seated*

Tonight we have come to witness the marriage vows of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ and to ask God's blessing upon their life together.

### **INVOCATION PRAYER**

Let us pray:

O God, who alone unites persons in holy bonds of covenant, without whose Spirit there is no abiding unity, be present in the inner being of these who desire to be married and among these who have come to witness their commitment to each other in the Spirit of the Love of Christ. Amen.

### **THE SYMBOLIC APPROVAL**

Who will, in behalf of the families and friends of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, give blessing upon this marriage? (We will — Mother and Father.)

### **THE MEDITATION CONCERNING MARRIAGE**

#### **DECLARATION OF INTENTION**

Marriage has great possibility of success and failure as well as joy and pain. The possibility of sorrow and happiness is greater in married life than in single life. The person who has not made the wager of devotion cannot be hurt by another as can the person who puts his/her faith in another, nor can he/she know joy as the one, who shares all with a trusted, loving companion.

Are you ready in the presence of this community to declare your intention to this undertaking of faith and love?

(To Groom) \_\_\_\_\_, are you willing to receive \_\_\_\_\_ as your wife, having full confidence that your abiding faith in each other will last a lifetime?

(Answer: I am.)

(To Bride) \_\_\_\_\_, are you willing to receive \_\_\_\_\_ as your husband, having full confidence that your abiding faith in each other will last a lifetime?

(Answer: I am.)

(To the altar.)

Let us pray:

Heavenly God, who ordained marriage for your children, and gave us love, we present these two who wish to be married. May their union be blessed with true devotion, spiritual commitment and love. God, give these two the ability to keep the covenant made between them. When selfishness shows itself, grant generosity; when mistrust is a temptation, give moral strength; where there is a misunderstanding, give patience and gentleness. When suffering be-comes their lot, give them a strong faith and abiding hope. Amen.

### **THE EXCHANGE OF WEDDING VOWS**

Marriage requires much generosity, unselfishness, flexibility, patience and love from both husband and wife. Under it lies responsibility of home and community, but when supported by all the commitments of love, these responsibilities do not weigh heavily. The realness and happiness of your marriage depend upon the inner experience of your heart and the strength of your commitment.

### **RINGS**

As a symbol of your commitment you have chosen rings.

\_\_\_\_\_, will you place this ring upon the finger of your bride and say your promise to her?

Groom: \_\_\_\_\_, I take you to be my wife from this time onward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together, to be loyal to you with my whole life and with all my being so that together we may serve God and others as long as we both shall live.

Bride: \_\_\_\_\_, I take you to be my husband from this time onward, to join with you and to share all that is to come, to give and to receive, to speak and to listen, to inspire and to respond, and in all circumstances of our life together, to be loyal to you with my whole life and with all my being so that together we may serve God and others as long as we both shall live.

### **CANDLE**

Symbolic of the fact that your lives have become one.

### **CHARGE TO THE COUPLE**

If marriage is to be maintained at a high level for both of you, this commitment must be practiced daily. Two people are not married in the ceremony; you only begin to be married. What I begun must continue with increasing meaning.

The trials which married life encounters are great; only a strong commitment and spiritual motivations can maintain it. Mere physical attractiveness is not enough. Only the love of God will suffice.

*Kneel if able.* The Lord God who created our first parents and sanctified their union in marriage; sanctify and bless you that you may please him both in body and soul, and live together in Holy Love until life's end. Amen.

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER *In unison.***

### **THE DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE**

The couple may join their right hands.

\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_, since you have consented together to be married and have witnessed the same before God and this community of relatives and friends and have committed love and faith to each other and have sealed the promises with rings, I announce that God has made you husband and wife, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

### **BENEDICTION**

May God, Son Jesus Christ, and Holy spirit direct and keep you in truth and love all the days of your life. Amen.

You may kiss the bride.

At the end of the ceremony, the congregation may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means.

— *Adapted, A New Wedding Service, Arthur Homburg*

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## **LITURGY FOR CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE IV**

### **ENTRANCE AND PRAISE**

While the people gather, instrumental or vocal music may be offered.

During the entrance of the wedding party, there may be instrumental music, or a hymn, a psalm, a canticle, or an anthem.

Minister to people: Friends, we are gathered as the Church to celebrate and praise God for the union of (name) and (name) in marriage. The bond and union of marriage were ordained by God, who created us male and female for each other. The Apostle Paul announced that where Christ is

present, there is surely equality as well as unity. With his presence and power, Jesus graced a wedding at Cana of Galilee.

(name) and (name) have come here to join in marriage.

Minister to the persons who are to marry: Christ calls you into union with him and with one another. I ask you now in the presence of God and this congregation to declare your intent.

Minister to the woman: Will you have this man to be your husband, to live together in a holy marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him in sickness and in health, and forsaking all other, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

Woman: I Will.

Minister to the man: Will you have this woman to be your wife, to live together in a holy marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor and keep him in sickness and in health, and forsaking all other, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

Man: I will.

Minister to people: The marriage of (name) and (name) unites two families and creates a new one. They ask for your blessing.

Parents or other representatives of the families, if present: We rejoice in your union, and pray God's blessing upon you.

People: IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST WE LOVE YOU. BY HIS GRACE, WE COMMIT OURSELVES WITH YOU TO THE BONDS OF MARRIAGE AND CHRISTIAN HOME.

Minister to people: Will all of you, by God's grace, do everything in your power to uphold and care for these two persons in their marriage?

People: WE WILL.

### **PROCLAMATION AND PRAISE**

Minister to people: The Lord be with you. People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Minister: Let us pray. God of all peoples, we rejoice in your life in the midst of our lives. You are the true light illumining everyone. You show us the way, the truth, and the life. You love us even when we are unfaithful. You sustain us with your Holy Spirit. You sustain us with your Holy Spirit. We praise you for your presence with us, and especially in this act of solemn covenant. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

One or more lections from Scripture are read; a hymn, psalm, canticle, anthem, or other music may be said or sung; and a sermon or other witness to Christian marriage is made. Extemporaneous intercessory prayer may be offered or the following:

Let us pray

Gracious God, bless this man and woman who come now to join in marriage, that they may give their vows to each other in the strength and spirit of your steadfast love. Let the promise of your word root and grow in their lives. Grant them vision and hope to persevere in trust and friendship all their days. Keep ever before them the needs of the world. By your grace enable them to be true disciples of Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

### **THE MARRIAGE**

The woman and man face each other joining hands.

Man to woman: In the name of God, I (name), take you, (name), to be my wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.

Woman to man: In the name of God, I (name), take you, (name), to be my husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until we are parted by death. This is my solemn vow.

The minister may bless the giving of rings or other symbols of the marriage.

Bless, O Lord, the giving of these rings (symbols), that they who wear them may live in your peace, and continue in your favor all the days of their life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The giver(s) may say to the recipient: (Name), I give you this ring as a sign of my vow, and with all that I am, and all that I have, I honor you [in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit].

The wife and husband join hands. The minister may place a hand or stole on their joined hands.

Minister to husband and wife: You have declared your consent and vows before God and this congregation. May God confirm your covenant, and fill you both with grace.

Minister to People: Now that (name) and (name) have given them-selves to each other by solemn vows, with the joining of hands, and the giving of rings, I announce to you that they are husband and wife in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together, let no one separate.

People: AMEN.

A doxology or other hymn may be sung.

## **THANKSGIVING**

The service continues with one of the following three options:

### **OPTION A: THANKS AND LORD'S PRAYER**

Minister to people: Friends, let us give thanks to the Lord.

People: THANKS BE TO GOD.

The minister offers a prayer or litany of thanksgiving and all respond with the Lord's Prayer. Here may be a hymn or Psalm 128.

### **OPTION B: HOLY COMMUNION**

Minister to people: As forgiven and reconciled people, let us offer ourselves and our gifts to God.

Here the husband and wife or representatives of the congregation may bring the elements to the Lord's Table.

### **OPTION C: AGAPE MEAL**

An appropriate form may be devised for the occasion. It may include an offering for the needy and hungry of the world, Scripture, testimonies, extemporaneous prayer, the Lord's Prayer, and sharing of the meal.

## **SENDING FORTH**

### **DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING**

Minister: God the Eternal keep you in love with each other, so that the peace of Christ may abide in your home. Go to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do. Bear witness to the love of God in this world so that those to whom love is a stranger will find in you generous friends. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: AMEN.

## **THE PEACE**

Minister: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

People:               AND ALSO WITH YOU.

The couple and minister(s) may greet each other, after which greetings may be exchanged throughout the congregation.

A hymn may be sung or other instrumental music may be played as the people leave.

## **LITURGY FOR CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE V**

### **ORGAN OR GUITAR RECITAL OR PRELUDE**

During this time the ushering in of guests and relatives, the lighting of the candles, and other preparatory acts may be done. If there is a printed liturgy, a 511ort paragraph for meditation may be printed here.

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

### **WEDDING PROCESSIONAL** (*congregation may stand*)

### **INVOCATION**

### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

### **SCRIPTURE READING**

### **WEDDING MEDITATION** (*congregation may sit*)

## **THE WEDDING CEREMONY**

### **ADDRESS**

The Minister, facing the people and the persons to be married (the woman on the man's left), addresses the people:

MARRIAGE is as old as the human family. It is the highest of life's relationships. It is of the ordaining of the Creator in the very nature of our being man and woman.

The occasion that declares publicly the intention of a man and a woman to enter into this relationship has become known in our society as a wedding. For the Christian, this occasion is not spectacle but worship; it is not mere formal observance, but a participation in the will of God for life. A wedding is a celebration of the highest we know in love — the pledging of the deepest fidelity — the expression of the highest aspiration. A relationship **so** sacred must not be entered into casually or flippantly but thoughtfully and deliberately.

On this occasion, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ come before family, friends, and church to affirm the choice that they have made of each other as a life's mate and their intention to establish a home for the raising of a family and fulfillment of life together.

Into this union, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, come now to be joined. If any of you can show just cause why they may not lawfully be married, speak now, or forever hold your peace.

If there is no impediment, the ceremony may proceed. If there is any, the minister may invite the bride, the groom and the dissenting party into a private room. If the matter is settled, the service may continue; if not, the minister shall tactfully dismiss the congregation.

Minister:           Let us pray.

Our God, bless these persons as they come before family, friends, and church to affirm the choice that they have made of each other as life's mate and their intention to establish a home where your love may be celebrated in the family. Grant them a seriousness of purpose that they may be delivered from empty words and casual commitments. For the fulfillment of their vows may they discern the varied facets of your many splended love. May your Word nurture them all the days of their lives that their dreams and aspirations for life may find fulfillment in the doing of your will in all things. As we share with them in the celebration of their

love on this occasion, may we all grow toward the perfection that is experienced in your love. Through Jesus Christ who so hallowed the wedding feast in Cana with his presence that the guests experienced a joy that they had never known before, we pray. Amen.

#### **DECLARATION OF INTENTION**

Minister: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, as you contemplate the making of your vows to each other, realize that henceforth your destinies shall be woven of one design and your perils and your joys shall not be known apart. The words "I love you," first spoken shyly is the full commitment of yourselves to each other and to an adult responsibility in society.

##### *Addressing the Groom*

\_\_\_\_\_, are you ready to enter this holy relationship, to accept the responsibility of a husband; to be loving, faithful, and helpful husband whether in days of success or adversity? *(The groom answers: 'I am.')*

##### *Addressing the Bride*

\_\_\_\_\_, are you ready to enter this holy relationship, to accept the responsibility of a husband; to be loving, faithful, and helpful husband whether in days of success or adversity? *(The bride answers: "I am.")*

##### *Addressing the Bride and Groom*

By these answers which you have given, your purpose and willingness to take one another for better or for worse from this day forward is affirmed.

##### *Let us pray:*

Eternal God, Creator and Sustainer of all people, Giver of all grace, Author of salvation: Look with favor upon this man and this woman, that they may grow in love and peace together; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

#### **OLD TESTAMENT LESSON** *(Genesis 2:4-9, 15-24 is suggested)*

#### **NEW TESTAMENT LESSON** *(I Corinthians 13 is suggested)*

#### **EXCHANGE OF VOWS**

Minister: Now, will you join your right hands and say your vows to each other. (Here the groom and the bride may offer their own prepared vows: In the absence of their own prepared vows, the following may be used:

Groom: I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you \_\_\_\_\_, to be my wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward; for better or for worse; to love, to cherish, and to honor, till death do us part.

Bride: I, \_\_\_\_\_, take you \_\_\_\_\_, to be my husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward; for better or for worse; to love, to cherish, and to honor, till death do us part.

#### **EXCHANGE OF RINGS**

Minister: Are there rings to further seal these vows? *(The rings having been removed from the ring bearers' cushion by the best man are placed in the hands of the minister).*

From the earliest time, the golden circle has been a symbol of wedded love. Being one unbroken circle, it symbolizes unending love. As often as either of you sees these circles, you will be reminded of this high moment and the unending love you promise.

##### *Addressing the Groom*

Take this ring and place it upon the wedding finger of \_\_\_\_\_ and say: "With this ring I thee wed: in the name of the Parent God, Son and of the Holy Spirit." *(The groom if possible may say his own statement or memorize this statement).*

### *Addressing to the Bride*

Take this ring and place it upon the wedding finger of \_\_\_\_\_ and say: This ring I give you, in token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love. *(The bride gives her own statement or if possible memorize this statement).*

*Server brings the coins: Minister says:*

These coins symbolize God's blessing upon \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of material possessions so that they may use them to attain comfortable life and to help those in need, as well, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The groom and bride both receive the coins from the minister with the groom's right hand under the bride's left hand and left hand over the bride's right hand both saying,

"These coins symbolize the pledge of my dedication to our welfare as husband and wife, our family and those in need. In the name of the Parent God, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Both the wife and the husband place these coins on the tray held by the server. The couple go up and kneel. Lighting of the nuptial candles, veiling and cording may take place here. The veil should be placed upon the shoulders or heads of both the groom and bride. This will emphasize the putting of family responsibility in both the bride and husband and the submission of their wills to God.

### **PRAYER OF BLESSING**

*(By the Bride's Parent)*

In the absence of a prepared prayer by the parent, the following may be used:

O Lord, be in this blessing that we give to our children. We, who have been through this road of married life, know there are a lot of adjustments and a lot of growing up ahead of them. Just as our love for each other and for You have sustained us, let their love sustain them in the days ahead and let them believe in Your helping them so that they will grow together in Your care. May the home they form be full of Your peace and Your joy, O God. May it always help others to know You're around and a part of their life. Through Jesus Christ, the Lord of all lives. Amen.

*(By the groom's Parent)*

In the absence of a prepared prayer by the parent, the following may be used:

O God, we thank You for the light in the air, the glory in the sky, and the joy on our children's faces today. Bless the people who made the day so good, for companions of their youth who have shared the joy and the work of the day, for the understanding and the good will of the minister(s), and for all good wishes and prayers from sincere and loving hearts present here today.

Bless these our children and grant them some day to know fully the mystery of your plan by which their lives have moved to seek each other out above all others to find completion. Reveal to them increasingly the beauty of their marriage vows. And so, our God, let them go forward seeking Your guidance and Your will. Hallow every hour of their united lives. Grant that in their love they may find Your face. Through Jesus, our Saviour. Amen.

### **Blessing**

The Minister, lifting her/his hands over the couple say,

O Most Loving God, let Your blessing be upon these Your servants now joined in lawful marriage; sanctify them and their lives, their home and their affairs, to Your glory. Maintain them in love to You and to each other; and send them the fullness of prosperity, quietness and peace. Guide their steps, protect them in all danger, spare them to one another's health and happiness through many days, and grant them an inheritance in Your everlasting abode; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Lord's Prayer to be sung or to be recited by everybody*

## **DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE**

The couple shall stand and join right hands. The minister shall place her/his right hand over the couple's hands and say:

By the authority committed to me as Minister of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, I declare that and are now husband and wife, according to the ordinance of God, and the Law of State; in the name of God our Parent, Jesus the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Whom therefore God has joined together, let no one put asunder.

## **PRESENTATION TO THE SPONSORS**

Couple turn to the sponsors who in turn shall stand.

Dear sponsors, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ hold you in highest esteem. They see in you and your family relationship a model of what they are establishing. May you continue to merit that esteem as you continue to watch and lead them with your concern and love.

## **PRESENTATION TO THE CONGREGATION**

The rest of the wedding party shall turn and face the congregation while the congregation stands.

Dear Friends, may I/We present you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Your presence here is an acknowledgement of your personal interest and concern for their happy home. May you continue to follow their new life together with the same interest and concern as today.

## **BENEDICTION**

The family of both groom and bride together with all the sponsors may come forward and encircle the newly wed couple as the benediction is pronounced by the minister.

Minister:            God the eternal Creator, keep you in love with each other, so that the joy and peace of Christ which only God can give stay with you now and in the days to come, in the name Holy Trinity. Amen.

## **RECESSIONAL**

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means.

# **DEATH RITES**

## **THE FUNERAL SERVICE**

When someone dies a memorial service or funeral is held. For Christians this is a solemn act of public worship. The family and friends of the de-ceased gather to celebrate his life before God and to affirm anew their faith in God's triumph over all evil, even death. What is a funeral all about and why?

### **GATHERED TO SHARE GRIEF**

We Christians attend the funeral of a friend because we wish to express to those closest to the deceased our love for them and for the deceased. We come to express and share our grief.

Grief is a powerful and often ill-understood emotion. We grieve because we have lost someone who has been part of our life. A person may have been sick a long time and his death is expected and even desired. Even so, there is shock to our feelings when death comes. Part of the shock comes with the realization that we can no longer reach that person. We feel cut off, empty. Grief may even make us numb. We know that the beloved person is dead, but our feelings refuse to let go.



Mixed with grief are feelings of guilt. If we remember disappointing the one who is gone, this leaves us feeling guilty. We may even imagine that we have hastened his death. The fact that the other person is now dead and we are still alive may move us to think, -I'm no better than he was. Why should he be dead and I still be alive?"

At no other time are we more aware of our friends and the surrounding silent presence of those who care than at a funeral. We may want to be alone, but we are powerfully supported when people turn out to be with us. The congregation is very important at a funeral service. It matters who is there. A funeral is truly a gathering by God. Grief is shared, guilt is faced, and healing can begin.

#### **GATHERED TO AFFIRM FAITH**

A funeral service is not only a sharing of grief; it is also a powerful expression of our faith in God's triumphant love. At a funeral we firm our faith that "there is nothing in death or life, in the realms of spirits, or superhuman powers. In the world as it is or the world as it shall be, in the forces of the universe. In heights or depths — nothing in all creation that can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38-39) The whole congregation at a funeral may well sing a strong hymn of praise such as "Our God, Our Help in Ages Past" or "For All the Saints." It is fitting that the service conclude with the organ playing the "Hallelujah Chorus" from Handel's Messiah We are gathered to praise the God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead.

The service includes an affirmation of faith. It also includes some affirmation of the life of the deceased. This may be a brief statement about his remembered life, given without flattery. We give thanks to God for all of his life. The casket needs to be closed so that the death mask does not interfere with our ability to affirm the life of the one to whom we are "paying our last respects."

#### **A POSSIBLE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR A FUNERAL**

##### **SENTENCES FROM SCRIPTURE**

Possibly Isaiah 40:28-31 or verses from Psalms 23, 103, 90, 121, 130 or 139.

##### **PRAYER**

Perhaps confessing our need of God's help in the face of death.

##### **A STATEMENT OF REMEMBRANCE**

Here may be included a brief statement of the facts of the life of the deceased.

##### **SCRIPTURE**

Readings should be selected to express our faith in God's triumph over evil and death in Jesus Christ and his presence, power, and love for his people.

##### **MEDITATION**

The brief sermon setting forth our faith and hope should be applied as closely to the situation as possible and those who mourn him.

##### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Through this prayer we affirm our faith, give thanks for the life of the person, and ask God to help his sorrowing people.

##### **HYMN**

A strong hymn of praise is appropriate when the service is held in the church.

##### **BENEDICTION**

This may be withheld until the committal at the graveside.

At the graveside a psalm may be read, the body committed to the ground, a prayer offered, and a benediction pronounced.

#### **FUNERAL Scott Francis Brenner**

The primary purpose of every Christian funeral should be to witness to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the secondary purpose to comfort all believers, and especially those who mourn with the hope of resurrection and the life more abundant.

By all means, the pastor must be put in charge of the funeral and it should be understood by all that so far as the service is concerned, the mortician is but the pastor's assistant. The pastor should have the final say in any unresolved situation. In the question of flowers, of the viewing, of the place and nature of the service, the pastor, after giving due consideration to the wishes of the family and of the mortician, should speak the last word.

Concerning the viewing of the body: First, there are practical and psychological reasons — and the psychological reason is the more compelling — why there should be no attempt to abolish this practice. The practice makes it easy for the bereaved to do the necessary grief work, and it affords an opportunity for others to share in this experience. Weeping is healing. The second factor is equally important. This grief work and viewing of the body should take place before the time of the service. If the casket has been brought to the church, let it be closed before it passes from the narthex to the nave. Whatever the circumstances, let the casket be closed before the funeral service begins, and remain closed.

When the funeral service begins, the casket will be closed. The pastor will meet and precede the casket as it is carried down the center aisle. Meanwhile, the people will rise and the minister, while he walks down the aisle, may read the introductory words, or the people may sing a hymn and then be seated. The service will follow the prescribed order. After the dismissal, the casket is carried out of the church, preceded by the minister and followed by the immediate company of the bereaved.

## **ORDER OF A VIGIL FOR THE DEAD**

### **WORDS OF REFLECTION**

There is a right time for everything:

A time to be born; A time to die;  
A time to plant; A time to harvest;  
A time to cry; A time to laugh;  
A time to grieve; A time to dance;  
A time to find; A time to lose;  
A time to be quiet; A time to speak up...

### **PRELUDE**

### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE COMMUNITY GATHERED**

This is the opportune time for the gathered community to get to know each other.

### **SONG OF ASSURANCE/FAITH CONFESSION**

Let us acknowledge the condition of our lives before the Lord of every part, who demands that we bear the burden of the whole world, and before whom no secret is hid.

### **PRAYER/HYMN OF CONFESSION**

### **SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

### **ABSOLUTION**

Minister: I call upon us to remember the unchanging word of life. The one who sustains us when we are alive is the one who sustains us when we are dead. We are loved, we are forgiven, we are accepted.

People: YOURS IS THE KINGDOM AND THE POWER AND THE GLORY FOREVER. AMEN.

### **SONG OF ASSURANCE/FAITH**

#### **THE OFFICE OF THE WORD**

- The Reading of the Word: Old Testament
- The Word Sung
- The Reading of the Word: New Testament

#### **MEDITATION**

#### **SONG**

#### **MEMORIAL TRIBUTE** *from friends/co-workers/neighbor*

#### **PRAYER AND BENEDICTION**

#### **CHORAL RESPONSE**

## **ORDER OF A FUNERAL**

#### **MEDITATIVE MUSIC**

#### **SILENT MEDITATION**

*I do not think God sent this grief into our life as a punishment or to test the quality of our faith.*

*I do believe it adds up to one of the highest opportunities of our life. To make us person of more than one dimension. To make us witnesses to the upholding strength of a present God. To write, in the blood of our tears, across the face of the world two truths: "Nothing can separate us from the love of God" and "There's nothing love cannot face." — James W. Angeli*

#### **THE COMMUNITY ACKNOWLEDGES GOD'S PRESENCE**

#### **WORDS OF AFFIRMATION FROM SCRIPTURE**

Minister: Psalm 46:1-3, 7; Psalm 90:1-4

#### **SONG OF FAITH/AFFIRMATION**

#### **PRAYER FOR THE GATHER**

Descend upon us, O Giver of life, in this time of death. Quicken our spirits, O Comforter, in this moment of despair. Brighten our path. O Glorious Light, in this hour of gloom.

Life and death are one, just as day and night are one. We behold the victory of death and in death there is life. This assurance we experience in Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **THE COMMUNITY REMEMBERS**

#### **WORDS OF REMEMBRANCE** — *Friends and Relatives*

#### **A TRIBUTE** *(could be a song, dance or poem)*

#### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE LIFE OF THE DEPARTED**

#### **THE COMMUNITY HEARS THE WORD OF GOD**

#### **CONTEMPORARY WORD**

#### **THE WORD SUNG** — *(Family or Choir)*

**READING OF SCRIPTURES**  
**MESSAGE OF HOPE**

**THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS**

**WORD OF GRATITUDE** — *(from a member of the bereaved family)*

**PRAYER OF COMMITMENT** *(Unison)*

**HYMN OF ETERNAL LIFE**

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

## **FUNERAL SERVICE (A LONGER FORM)**

The Pastor shall begin the service by reading one or more of the following sentences.

Jesus said, I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die."

The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

The righteous live forever, and the care of them is with the most High: with his right hand he shall cover them, and with his arms shall he shield them.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

The Pastor may give the invocation in his own words or use the following prayer:

Almighty and most merciful God, the consolation of the sorrowful and the support of the weary, who does not willingly grieve or afflict the children of men: Look down in tender love and pity, we beseech Thee, upon Thy servants of I his bereaved household, whose joy is turned into mourning; so that while they mourn they may not murmur, and in their perplexity they may not despair. According to Thy great mercy, uphold, strengthen and comfort them, that they may not faint under this sore affliction. Let them find in Thee their strength and refuge, so that they may face the future with confidence and hope; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Following a hymn or an anthem or a solo, the Pastor shall read from the Scriptures using two or more appropriate passages, such as:

Ps. 23; I Cor. 15:20-22, 35-38, 42-44, 49, 52-58;

Ps. 90; Rev. 14:13; 1n. 14:1-4; 1 Thess. 4:1, 3-18

An address or sermon may be given; then the Pastor shall pray in his own words or use the following prayer:

O God, Thou King eternal, immortal, and invisible, the blessed and only Potentate; may we, who cannot see Thee with the eyes of the flesh, behold Thee steadfastly with the eyes of faith, that we may not faint under the manifold trials and temptations of this mortal life, but endure as seeing Thee who is invisible. Grant that having fulfilled Thy will upon earth, we may behold Thy face in heaven and be made partakers of those unspeakable joys which Thou has promised to them, who love Thy Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. For His sake, we beseech Thee to hear us. To him, with Thee the Father and the Holy Spirit, we ascribe, all glory and praise, forever and ever. Amen.

A hymn may follow: the Pastor shall give the Benediction.

Now the God of Peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

## THE COMMITTAL SERVICE

### AT THE GRAVE

The Pastor may read any of these opening sentences.

I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one; I died, and behold I am alive for evermore.

The Pastor shall commit the body to the earth with these words,

To the mercy of Almighty God we commend the soul of our brother/ sister departed and we committed his/her body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust, in the assurance that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth. Blessed, indeed says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them.

The Pastor may pray in his own words or use the following prayer:

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep: grant us as we stand beside the grave of our brother/sister departed, that the voice which spoke unto the women at the sepulcher may speak also **to** us, saying: -He whom you seek is not here; he has risen and goes before you." When the sense of sorrow and loneliness weighs heavily upon us, and the shadows deepen, and faith falters, and hope grows dim, draw us closer to Thee, O God. We beseech Thee to enfold us in Thy love, sustain us by Thy grace, and keep us ever loyal to the blessed memories of this solemn hour, until the night is past, and with the morn we see those angel faces which we have loved and lost awhile; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer may be said in unison here, and the Pastor shall give the benediction.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

### FUNERAL OF A CHILD

The Pastor may read one of both opening sentences,

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me, and do not hinder them; for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven."

As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear him. For knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

The Pastor shall pray in his own words or use the following prayer,

O God, our heavenly Father, whose goodness is everlasting and whose mercies never fail: Thine is the beauty of childhood and Thine the light that shines in the face of age. We commend to Thee those who mourn. May Thy strength and consolation be given to them and endue them with all holy thoughts and a living hope. Grant that the words of Thy Son, our Saviour, which speak of His care for little children may breathe peace into their troubled hearts. May they be assured that the love in which they rejoiced for a season is not lost, that the child that has been taken out of their sight is with Thee, safe in Thy eternal love and care; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer may be said in unison; the Pastor shall read from the Scriptures, using an appropriate selection, such as Ps. 23; Matt. 18:1-5, 10, 14; or Rev. 7:16, 17.

An address may be given or the Pastor may read a suitable poem.

A hymn may be sung; the Pastor shall pray using his own words; and he shall give the Benediction.

## **THE COMMITTAL SERVICE**

### **AT THE GRAVE**

The Pastor shall read the following verses of Scripture,

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. It is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish. (Matt. 5:4; John 14:27; Matt. 18:14)

While flowers are being cast upon the casket, the Pastor may say,

In the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, who took little children in his arms and blessed them, we commit to the ground the body of this dear child, in the assurance that the he/she is at home with our Father in Heaven.

Jesus said, "Unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

*The Pastor may pray in his own words, or use one of the following prayers,*

Almighty God our Heavenly Father, who in Christ Jesus has promised eternal life to us and to our children; as we lay in the grave the body of this child we thank Thee for the sure and certain hope that as he/she has born the image of the earthly, he/she shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Give Thine angels charge over us; guard us ever in life and in death, that whether we wake or sleep, we may live together with Thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, whose most dear Son did take little children into His arms and blessed them; give us grace, we beseech Thee, to entrust the soul of this child to Thy never failing care and love, and bring us all to Thy heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty and most merciful Father, who grants to children an abundant entrance into Thy kingdom; grant us grace so to conform our lives to their innocence and perfect faith, that at length, united with them, we may stand in Thy presence in fullness of joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Pastor shall give the benediction.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellow-ship of the Holy Spirit, be with us evermore. Amen.

# **COMMISSIONING RITES**

## **LITURGY OF THE ORDINATION TO THE MINISTRY I**

This order may be incorporated into a Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word following the sermon. An affirmation of faith and a hymn may precede the Order for Ordination to Ministry.

### **GREETING**

### **PRESENTATION**

### **EXHORTATION**

### **EXAMINATION**

### **ACCLAMATION**

### **LAYING ON OF HANDS**

### **DECLARATION**

The Order for Installation of a Pastor may begin, following the instructions in that order. If installation does not follow immediately, a hymn may be sung and a Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word continues, omitting the affirmation of faith.

Following the sermon, all who are able may stand and unite in an affirmation of faith and a hymn. After the hymn, all may be seated except the officiating ministers, the representative(s) of the local church, and the ordinand. The ordinand may remain in the congregation.

The greeting may be used at the opening of the service rather than at the opening of this order.

### **GREETING**

The bishop or the moderator or another officer of the Conference may greet the people, and they may respond in these or similar words.

### **OFFICIATING BISHOP/MODERATION**

Grace to you and peace from God, who is and who was and who is to come, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness and the sovereign of the rulers on earth.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Church of \_\_\_\_\_  
(association) (conference)

Conference of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines greets you in the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church.

### **PEOPLE**

TO GOD, WHO BY THE POWER AT WORK WITHIN US IS ABLE TO DO FAR MORE ABUNDANTLY THAN ALL THAT WE ASK OR THINK, BE GLORY IN THE CHURCH AND IN CHRIST JESUS TO ALL GENERATIONS, FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.

### **PRESENTATION**

A representative of the local church that is requesting the ordination may address a representative of the Conference in these or similar words. The ordinand's full name may be used in the first reference. Thereafter, the first name only may be used.

#### **LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE** *addressing the gathered community representative*

(Local Church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines, after care-fully considering the call to ordained ministry of (full name of ordinand), respectfully requests that the (Conference) ordain (name) to the ministry of the church of Jesus Christ, consistent with scripture and with the traditions of the church universal, and according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE** *addressing the congregation*

The (Conference) has reviewed the request of (local church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

We have prayerfully examined (name) concerning her/his fitness for ministry in Christ's church. We are pleased, on behalf of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, to authorize the ordination of (name) into the Christian ministry after her/his passing the ordination review and examination requirements of the church.

#### *Addressing the Ordinand*

(name) servant of God, we invite you to come forward as a sign of your consent to receive ordination into Christian ministry.

The ordinand may leave his or her place in the congregation and may stand, if able, at the chancel before the officers of the Conference, who review(s) the United Church of Christ in the Philippines requirements regarding ordination.

## **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines acknowledges as its sole head, Jesus Christ, Son of God and Savior. It acknowledges as kindred in Christ all who share in this confession.

It looks to the word of God in the scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world. It claims as its own the faith of the historic church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant reformers.

It affirms the responsibility of the church in each generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God.

In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and Holy Communion.

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines recognizes that God calls the whole church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the gospel in church and society.

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines seeks to undergird the ministry of its members by nurturing faith, calling forth gifts, and equipping members for Christian service.

## **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

Ordination is the rite whereby the United Church of Christ in the Philippines through an association, in cooperation with the person and a local church of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, recognizes and authorizes that member whom God has called to ordained ministry, and sets that person apart by prayer and the laying on of hands.

By this rite ordained ministerial standing is conferred and authorization given to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

## **EXHORTATION**

The Officiating Bishop/Moderator may then say these or similar words.

## **CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE (A)**

Hear these words from the prophet Isaiah: I heard the voice of the Holy One saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me!"

How wonderful it is to see a messenger coming across the mountains, bringing good news, the news of peace! The messenger announces victory and says to Zion, "Your God reigns."

The Spirit of God is upon me, because the Holy One has anointed me to bring good news to the poor, heal the brokenhearted, proclaim liberty to the captives, and freedom to those who are bound.

## **CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE (B)**

Hear these words from the prophet Paul: How are people to call one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? So faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ.

## **CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE (C)**

Hear these words from Jesus Christ to the first disciples: Follow me, and I will make you fishers of humanity.

Hear also these words of Jesus: You know that the rulers of the Gentiles dominate them, and their great leaders exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave.

## **EXAMINATION**

A representative of the association may then ask the ordinand the following questions.



**CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

(name), before God and this congregation, we ask you: Are you persuaded that god has called you to be an ordained minister of the church of Jesus Christ, and are you ready with the help of God to enter this ministry and to serve faithfully in it?

Ordinand: I AM.

**CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

Do you, with the church throughout the world, hear the word of God in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and do you accept the word of God as the rule of Christian faith and practice?

Ordinand : I DO.

**CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

Do you promise to be diligent in your private prayers and in reading the scriptures, as well as in the public duties of your office?

Ordinand: I DO, RELYING ON GOD'S GRACE.

**CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

Will you be zealous in maintaining both the truth of the gospel and the peace of the church speaking the truth in love?

Ordinand: I WILL, RELYING ON GOD'S GRACE.

**CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

Will you be faithful in preaching and teaching the gospel, in administering the sacraments and rites of the church and in exercising pastoral care and leadership?

Ordinand: I WILL, RELYING ON GOD'S GRACE.

**CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

Will you keep silent all confidences shared with you?

Ordinand: I Will, RELYING ON GOD'S GRACE.

**CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

Will you seek to regard all people with equal love and concern and undertake to minister impartially to the needs of all?

Ordinand: I WILL, RELYING ON GOD'S GRACE.

**CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

Do you accept the faith and order of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines; and will you, as an ordained minister in this communion, ecumenically reach out toward all who are in Christ and show Christian love to people of other faiths and people of no faith?

Ordinand: I DO AND I WILL, RELYING ON GOD'S GRACE.

**ACCLAMATION**

Those official delegates of the association (clergy and others so designated) who are able may stand.

**CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE** *addressing the members of the Conference*

People of God, you have heard the promises (name) has made. What is your will?

**ASSOCIATION MEMBERS**

BY THE GRACE OF GOD, HE/SHE IS WORTHY! LET US ORDAIN HER/HIM. COME, HOLY SPIRIT.

#### **CONFERENCE LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

Will you support (name) in the ministry of Christ?

#### **ASSOCIATION MEMBERS**

WE WILL.

#### **LAYING ON OF HANDS**

The ordinand may kneel, if able. A leader may invite those who are to share in the laying on of hands to come forward. The congregation may be given an opportunity to participate in the ordination in a symbolic way. "Veni Creator, Spiritus" or another hymn may be sung by the choir alone or with the congregation.

#### **OFFICIATING BISHOP/MODERATOR**

The laying on of hands is the symbolic act whereby the church in every age recognizes God's call to ministry in the lives of faithful women and men and asks the Holy Spirit to confer on them gifts for ordained ministry.

Those who have come forward to lay on hands may now do so. Silence may be observed. Then an association representative may lead in prayer.

Eternal God, in wisdom you govern all things, and from the beginning you have chosen faithful people to serve you in ministry, calling some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip all your people for the work of the ministry and for building up the body of Christ. Now bless and sanctify by your Holy Spirit your servant (name), whom we, in your name and in obedience to your will, by prayer and with the laying on of hands, ordain to the ministry of the church, committing to him/her the authority to preach your word, administer the sacraments, and exercise the responsibilities of pastor and teacher.

Bestow on (name) the power of your Holy Spirit, confirming what we do. Let the same mind be in her/him that was also in Christ Jesus. Enable him/her to nourish your people in the faith of the gospel. Fill her/his speech with truth and her/his life with purity. Increase the faith of ) in you, strengthen him/her in the day of trouble, prosper his/her words and works that your name may be glorified and your truth exalted; through Jesus Christ our Sovereign and Savior.

People: AMEN. THANKS BE TO GOD!

#### **DECLARATION**

The newly ordained minister may rise.

#### **OFFICIATING BISH OP/ MODERA TOR**

In the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church, and by the authority of the (association) Association of the (conference) Conference of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, I declare you to be ordained in to the ministry of Jesus Christ.

A Bible may be presented to the newly ordained minister with these or other words.

#### **OFFICIATING BISHOP/MODERATOR**

Receive at our hands this Bible of which you are appointed as an interpreter. Be diligent in the study of its message that you may speak with the authority of truth, and be a faithful minister of the word and sacraments.

A certificate of ordination may be presented, and a gesture of Christian love may be made with these or other words.

#### **OFFICIATING BISHOP/MODERATOR**

You are granted ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines; and in behalf of its people, we offer you the hand of Christian love.

The leaders may greet the newly ordained minister.

If the newly ordained minister is to be installed within this service, the Order for Installation of a Pastor follows the Order for Ordination to Ministry.

If installation does not immediately follow, a hymn may be sung. A Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word continues. It is appropriate that the newly ordained minister serve communion and give the benediction.

## **LITURGY FOR THE ORDINATION TO THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY II**

This order could be used when ordination service is done during Annual Conference time. It should be part of a regular order of worship.

### **HYMN OF DEDICATION**

### **PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES FOR ORDINATION**

#### **ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION**

Minister: Beloved in Christ, the (name of conference) of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines is now assembled. to ordain to the Christian ministry (names of candidates). God, by the Holy Spirit, calls men and on to serve according to the gifts bestowed upon them. And the chosen servants, God grants grace that they should share in the ministry of the Church, making known to all the riches of the new creation in Jesus Christ. To the church, God has given the duty, not only to pray for the increase of its ministry, but also to prove and try those who may be entering upon the office of the Christian ministry so that no person will set out to serve the people without due consideration; but that men and women of pure heart and good conduct and sound learning will be found for the service of upholding the people of God. It is a good practice to seek out men and women of sound character, knowledge, experience and wisdom to receive at the hands of the Conference the authority to exercise leadership, not lordship, among God's people. Men and women are ordained so that the wider work of the Church in ministry to the world may be more fully undertaken, and the gifts of all members maybe dedicated and channeled to a task too great for any one to perform alone. We have duly considered the call which you have presented to these candidates for ordination through us. We have diligently inquired into their soundness of doctrine and manner of life, and are persuaded of their gifts and learning for this excellent task. We, therefore, present them before you to receive ordination with the laying on of hands of this Conference. They are set apart among us to be messengers and servants of the Lord, and to be co-workers in Christ's vineyard.

#### **ADDRESS TO THE CANDIDATES**

Minister: Dearly beloved, will you now attend to the words of the Holy Scriptures as they shall be read from the writing of the Apostle Paul:

Of this gospel I have become a servant according to the gift of God's grace that was given me by the working of His power. Although I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given to me to bring to the Gentiles the news of the boundless riches of Christ, and to make everyone see what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things (Ephesians 3:7-9, NRSV)

The gifts He gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-13, NRSV).

You have heard both in your examination by the Ministry/Examination Committee and in these words of Holy Scriptures of what dignity and importance is this ministry to which you are called.

We trust that you have pondered, prayed and weighed well these things before this time; and that you have clearly determined, by God's grace, to give yourselves wholly to this work to which it has pleased God to call you, so that you may continually grow in your ministry and be worthy servants of the Lord.

### **VOWS OF FAITH AND SERVICE**

Minister: And now that this Conference may also understand your mind and purpose in this matter, and that your public declaration may move you more earnestly to use all care and diligence, all patience and wisdom, all hope and love, in ministering for Christ who has called you; you shall answer plainly these questions which we shall ask in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and his Church:

Do you sincerely believe that you are called of God to this special task and office of ministry in God's Church?

Candidates: I DO SO BELIEVE WITH ALL MY HEART.

Minister: Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all truth necessary for eternal salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ; and are you determined out of the same Holy Scriptures to instruct and guide the people committed to your care that they may enter into life in Christ?

Candidates: I AM SO PERSUADED AND DETERMINED, BY GOD'S GRACE.

Minister: Will you strive earnestly to fulfill all the duties and responsibilities of a faithful minister of Christ: preaching the Word of God in sincerity; administering the Holy Sacraments in purity; seeing to it that proper discipline is maintained in the Household of Faith; and using all your talents and strengths to promote the work, welfare and unity of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines?

Candidates: I WILL DO, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Minister: Will you maintain and set forward, as fully as you are able, reasonableness, order, charity, peace and love among all Christian people, and especially among them that shall be committed to your care?

Candidates: I WILL DO, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Question: Will you reverently give heed and accord due respect to all those who labor with you and to those to whom authority over you in the Church is committed?

Candidates: I WILL STRIVE SO TO DO.

Minister: May the Holy God, who has given you this will to declare all these things, grant also to you the grace and power to perform the same: that God may accomplish through you the good work that has been started in you.

### **LAYING ON OF HANDS**

Candidates kneeling; ordained ministers and lay representatives laying on their hands on the candidates.

Minister: Let us pray: Merciful and loving God, who, from the beginning has ordained for your church a ministry of witness, service, and reconciliation in the world, we thank you that it has pleased you by this ministry of men and women to gather a church into yourself to glorify your name on earth and to bring you, on those your servants, whom we now set apart in obedience to your will to a special service and work in the ministry of the church. Pour upon them your Holy Spirit and qualify them for the work and office of ministry in the church, now committed to them by the authority of the church through the laying on of hands. Graciously grant them that authority and gentleness, that zeal and meekness, that purity and spiritual discernment that shall mark them as truly your minister. Let your Word abide with them. Govern and guide them throughout their ministry to the glory of your holy name, the promotion of your kingdom upon the earth, the

building up of your church, and the spread of your blessed Gospel throughout the whole world. Unto you, O God, with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, be all the honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

#### **DECLARATION OF ORDINATION**

Minister: In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the authority which he has given to this church, we do now declare you (Name of Ordained) ordained to the work and office of the Christian ministry in the Church of Jesus Christ.

#### **PRESENTATION OF SYMBOLS OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY**

Minister: As symbols of your being yoked with Christ in his ministry, we give you these vestments, these stoles, and these Bible.

#### **CHARGE TO THE CANDIDATES**

Minister: Listen now to the words of Apostle Paul to Timothy:

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and because he is coming to rule as King, I solemnly urge you to preach the message, to insist upon proclaiming it, to convince, reproach, and encourage, as you teach with all patience, The time will come when people will not listen to sound doctrine, but will follow their own desires and will collect for themselves more and more teachers who will tell them what they are itching to hear. They will turn away from listening to the truth and give their attention to legends. But you must keep control of yourself in all circumstances; endure suffering, do the work of a preacher of the Good News, and perform your whole duty as a servant of God." (II Timothy 4: 1-5).

#### **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION** *Candidates kneeling if able*

Minister: Ever blessed God, who did of olden times call those whom you would for your service, and who by your providence continue to raise up evangelists, pastors, teachers and prophets for your people, bless, we pray, these your servants, whom we have set apart to a ministry in your great church. Endue them with your spiritual grace. Help them perform faithfully their vows and the service to which they are dedicated, that continuing steadfast unto death, they may be received with all faithful servants into the joy of the Lord. Hear us, O God, in all our prayers for the sake of your beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **BENEDICTION**

Choral Response:

The leaders may greet the newly ordained minister.

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means.

### **INSTALLATION OF A NEW PASTOR INTO THE MINISTRY OF A LOCAL CHURCH**

When a pastor starts a new assignment he needs to be installed. This binds the pastoral relationship between the pastor and the local church. This should be planned during the annual congregational meeting, or by a committee created to plan for the consecration service. The pastor who is being replaced will prepare the usual order of worship based on what has been planned. The message should be given by the new pastor. After the sermon, the installing officer will announce the reason for gathering. The following is suggested to be used, or they can use another, depending upon the need of the occasion.

#### **OPENING WORDS**

Presiding Minister: Beloved brothers and sisters, you called Ptr./Rev. \_\_\_\_\_ to be your pastor as you have decided during the annual congregational meeting held last \_\_\_\_\_. After

deliberations and study, we extended the call through the Conference. S/he signified her/his willingness to work with us. By the authority of the Conference, we now proceed to complete the process by installing your pastor in the name of our Lord Jesus as pastor of this congregation.

*(At this point, the pastor to be installed stands in front of the installing officer who will ask him/her the following questions).*

Presiding Minister: (addressing the pastor)

Dearly beloved, do you willingly accept this responsibility? Are you ready to administer and to care for this church as your pastoral charge?

Pastor: I am willing and ready.

Presiding Minister: Do you promise with all your fidelity to execute your responsibility in accordance to the Constitution and By-Laws of the Church? Performing them with all your heart, sincere and true for the glory of God and the benefit of this church, living a respectable and dignified life as one who is a minister and pastor of the Gospel of Christ according to your calling?

Pastor: Yes, I promise to do so.

### **CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION**

Presiding Minister: Installation confirms and celebrates the covenantal relationship of the pastor and local church to share mutually in the mission of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. You, who are members of this local church, do you continue and uphold your call by receiving Pastor to become your Pastor.

Congregation: (Stand up and say) YES, WE DO.

Presiding Minister: Do you promise to accept the Word of Truth from his/her mouth with humility and love, and that you are willing to obey his/her words of exhortation and discipline? from him/her?

Congregation: YES, WE DO.

Presiding Minister: Do you promise to reassure him/her when s/he is discouraged to help her/him in her/his efforts for your spiritual growth?

Congregation: YES, WE DO.

Presiding Minister: Do you agree that while s/he is your pastor, you will try your best to help him/her in his/her needs so that s/he will live worthy of imaging God — a decent and honorable representative of Christ and the Church.

Congregation: YES, WE DO.

### **ACT OF INSTALLATION**

Presiding Minister: In the name of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, in behalf of the \_\_\_\_\_ Conference, I declare that Pastor \_\_\_\_\_ is fully installed as pastor of the local church, the \_\_\_\_\_. Dearly beloved, let us pray to God, the foundation of grace and glory to bless the bond that bids pastor and people. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

Let us pray:

Most gracious and powerful God, who is the ruler of the universe, who, from the beginning has established the covenant of ministering, we are very grateful for your goodness today in your house of worship. We pray that you will continue to pour out your mercies and blessings to your child whom we have installed. Pour out your Spirit so that whatever s/he says and does will be for the Glory of Your Name. Help him/her serve you in full humility, truth and faithfulness to your will.

O Lord our God, bless this congregation. Let your love nurture them into compassion for one another and for other people. Let your words shine in their lives and may they learn the true essence of serving you. Bind us all in your care that we will become truly instruments for the transformation of this earth towards your kingdom, Amen.

*(After this the newly installed pastor will pray).*

Newly Installed Pastor: Oh Lord, our God, we pray that you bless us, not only your servant and this church, but also bless all the churches in this land, in this whole world.

Gather all your people to be united in you. Forge out all disunity, misunderstanding and wickedness. May your grace, mercy, peace and love grow and blossom into a life worthy of your glory. Pour out your spirit, lord, bless us. In the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **THE BLESSING**

Presiding Minister: The peace of God, that passeth all understanding, guide your hearts, thoughts in the knowledge and love of God, his Son Jesus Christ, our Lord and the blessings of the Holy Spirit, be with you now and forever more. Amen.

## **LITURGY FOR THE LICENSING OF CANDIDATES FOR THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY**

This may be part of the Annual Conference Assembly and is inserted at the appointed place in the Liturgy.

### **SCRIPTURAL SENTENCES**

Minister: Praise is due to you, O God in Zion, and to you shall vows be performed (Ps. 65:1). Blessed is he whom you have chosen and brought near, to dwell in your courts. We shall be satisfied with the goodness in your house, your holy Temple. (Ps. 65:4) The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest (Matt. 9:37). As the Father has sent me, even so I send you (John 20:21). And lo, I am with you always to the close of the age. (Matt. 28:20).

### **PRAYER FOR THE CANDIDATES**

Co-Minister/Liturgist: Let us pray for the increase of the ministry, the welfare of the church, and the conversion of the world to Christ. Let us pray; Most gracious and loving God, we praise you for calling us to be a servant people, and for gathering us into the body of Christ. We thank you for choosing to add to our number brothers and sisters in faith and ministry. Together, may we live in your Spirit, and so love one another, that we may have the mind of Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom we give honor and glory forever. Amen.

### **ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION**

Minister: Beloved in Christ, God by the Holy Spirit calls men and women to serve according to the gifts bestowed upon them. And to chosen servants, God grants this grace that they should make known the riches of Christ by the preaching of the Gospel. Unto the Church, God has given commandment not only to pray for the increase of the ministry but also to prove and try those who seek the sacred office that no one shall be licensed suddenly, but that people of pure heart and good conduct, able to speak and live for edification be found for service of the sanctuary. Therefore, it is proper that those who desire to give themselves to this ministry should not only prepare them-selves by study, prayer, and good works, but should also have the opportunity to try their gifts by preaching and to prove themselves to the churches as workers fitted rightly to divide the Word of Truth.

According to the form of government of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, the oversight of these matters is committed to the Conference, which is to examine every candidate

for the sacred office in regard to Christian experience, the person's motives in seeking the ministry, and the person's proficiency in the knowledge which is necessary for a servant of God. Having made this examination and being satisfied with its result, this Conference is ready to license (name of the candidates) who will now present themselves before this congregation.

## **PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES FOR THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY**

### **VOWS OF FAITH AND SERVICE**

Minister: You will faithfully give answers to these questions:

Do you believe the Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, to be the Word of God, the only infallible and sufficient rule of faith and practice?

Candidates: I DO BELIEVE.

Minister: Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Lord and Savior?

Candidates: I DO BELIEVE.

Minister: Do you promise to study the history, unity and the doctrines of the Church?

Candidates: BY GOD'S GRACE, I DO PROMISE,

Minister: Do you promise to submit yourself in the Lord, to the government of this Conference, or another Conference in the bounds of which you may be called?

Candidates: BY GOD'S GRACE, I DO PROMISE.

### **DECLARATION AND BLESSINGS**

Those who are able in the congregation may stand while candidates kneel.

Minister: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the authority he has given to the Church for its edification, we do license you to preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments of the church, wherever God in providence may call you.

Minister: May the blessings of God rest upon you, and the Spirit of Christ fill your hearts.

People: AMEN.

Minister: Glory be to God the Parent, and to the Son, Jesus Christ, and to the Holy Spirit!

People: AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING IS NOW AND EVER SHALL BE, WORLD WITHOUT END.

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means. A Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of Word continues.

## **ORDER FOR INSTALLATION OF A PASTOR I**

This may be part of a regular Sunday Liturgy.

### **OPENING WORDS**

Minister: *Addressing the congregation*

Friends, we are about to induct (name of the new pastor) into the pastoral ministry of this church and to recognize him/her as pastor. His/her call to be your pastor has been carefully considered by the Conference. He/she has signified to the Conference his/her willingness to accept this call. And so, by the authority of the Conference, we now proceed to constitute and install him/her in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, as pastor of this congregation.

### **VOWS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Minister: *Addressing the candidate*



Dearly beloved, you will now faithfully give answers to these questions: Do you believe in your heart that you are truly called of God to the pastoral oversight of this church?

Pastor: I DO BELIEVE.

Minister: Do you promise to execute your charge with all fidelity, to preach and teach the Word of God from the Holy Scriptures, to lead the congregation in worship and administer the sacraments, to fulfill the pastoral office, and to live a godly life, adorning the doctrine of God our Savior in all things?

Pastor: I DO PROMISE.

Minister: *Addressing the congregation*

Do you, members of this Church, acknowledge and receive (name of new pastor) as pastor of this Church, promising him/her all due honor and support as he/she fulfills his/her ministry among you?

People: WE DO.

### **PRAYER OF INDUCTION**

New pastor kneeling; family of the pastor standing beside; those who are able in the congregation may stand.

Minister: Bless, O God, we beseech you, this your servant to whom the care and nurture of these people in this church is now committed. Pour out your Holy Spirit upon him/her that he/she may fulfill his/her sacred duties with all faithfulness, diligence, and courage. Give to him/her the spirit of power, of love, and of sound mind. Make his/her ministry to be the means for awakening the careless, strengthening the faithful, comforting the afflicted, building up your Church, and converting sinners to you. Guard him/her against the snares of temptation that he/she may be kept pure in heart, fervent in spirit, valiant against evil. And grant that at last he/she may receive the crown of life which you have promised to your faithful servants. Bless abundantly the people of his charge; edify them by his/her ministry, establish them in all holy living and godliness, leading them together into the manifold service of Christ, and keeping them by your power through faith into salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **THE ACT OF INDUCTION**

Minister: *Placing right hand on the head of the new pastor*

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in behalf of this church, we declare you duly installed Pastor of this congregation. May the God of all grace, who has called us to eternal glory by Christ Jesus, make you perfect, established and strengthened. To God be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

### **THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP**

### **THE CHARGE TO THE NEW PASTOR**

Minister: Listen now to what Apostle Peter said in his letter:

"I appeal to you to be shepherds of the flock that God gave you and to take care of it willingly, as God wants you to. Do your work, not for more pay, but from a real desire to serve. Do not try to rule over those who have been put in your care, but be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the glorious crown which will never lose its brightness." (I Peter 5:3-4).

### **THE BLESSINGS**

Minister: May God bless us all with a loving sense of the Lord's near presence, to guide us, to protect and help us. And may we know and understand what it means to walk close with God all our life together. Amen.

All: THANKS BE TO GOD.

The people show their approval and support by applause, a hymn or some other means. The congregation and the newly pastor may be seated.

## **LITURGY FOR INSTALLATION OF A PASTOR IN A LOCAL CHURCH II**

This order may be incorporated into a Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word following the sermon. An affirmation of faith and a hymn may precede this order. When it is used immediately following the Order for Ordination to Ministry, begin with the covenant.

### **GREETING**

### **PRESENTATION**

### **EXHORTATION**

### **COVENANT**

### **PRAYER OF INSTALLATION**

### **DECLARATION**

A hymn may be sung. A Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word continues, omitting the affirmation of faith.

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Following the sermon, all who are able may stand and unite in an affirmation of faith and a hymn. After the hymn, all may be seated except the representative(s) of the local church, the representative(s) of the association, and the pastor who is to be installed. The pastor to be installed may remain among the congregation.

The greeting may be used at the opening of the service rather than at the opening of this order.

When the Order for Installation of a Pastor is part of a service of ordination, begin with the covenant.

### **GREETING**

The moderator or another representative of the Conference may greet the people, and they may respond in these or similar words.

### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE/MINISTER**

The \_\_\_\_\_ Conference of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines greets you in the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church in heaven and on earth.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.

### **PEOPLE**

LET US LOOK TO JESUS THE PIONEER AND PERFECTER OF OUR FAITH, WHO FOR THE JOY THAT WAS WAITING ENDURED THE CROSS, DESPISING THE SHAME, AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE THRONE OF GOD.

### **PRESENTATION**

A representative of the local church that is requesting the installation may address a representative of the association in these or similar words. The pastor's full name may be used in the first reference. Thereafter, the first name only may be used.

### **LOCAL CHURCH REPRESENTATIVE**

*Addressing the association representative*

(Local Church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has called (full name of pastor), as its pastor and teacher and respectfully requests that the (association) Association install her/him in this ministry among us, according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

#### **CONFERENCE MODERATOR/MINISTER**

*Addressing the congregation*

The \_\_\_\_\_ Conference has reviewed the request of (local church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

We have prayerfully examined (name), and we are pleased to install him/her as your pastor and teacher.

*Addressing the pastor*

(name), servant of God, we invite you to come forward as a sign of your acceptance of the call to this office.

The ordinand may leave his or her place in the congregation and may stand, if able, before the representative(s) of the association.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

Installation is the action of an association of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines in cooperation with a local church. Installation confirms and celebrates the covenantal relationship among a local church, its pastor and teacher, and the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Installation is a sign that these covenantal partners are committed to share mutually in the mission of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and of the ecumenical church.

#### **EXHORTATION**

Representative(s) of the association may read these or other words from scripture.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

*Addressing the congregation*

Hear these words from the prophet Paul: We beg you, our brothers and sisters, to pay proper respect to those who work among you, who guide and instruct you in the Christian life. Treat them with the greatest respect and love because of the work they do. Be at peace among yourselves.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

*Addressing the pastor*

We urge you, our sister/brother, warn the idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with all.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

*Addressing all*

See that no one pays back wrong for wrong, but at all times make it your aim to do good to one another and to all people. Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances. This is what God wants of you, in your life in Christ Jesus. Amen.

When this order immediately follows the Order for Ordination to Ministry, begin this order with the covenant.

#### **COVENANT**

The pastor may remain before the representative(s) of the Conference.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

*Addressing the Congregation*

Dear friends,

(Local Church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines, has declared that, having gathered under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it has called (name), to minister in this place as pastor and teacher and that it now receives him/her as appointed by God for this ministry.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Conference of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines has declared that she/he has met all the necessary conditions for installation to this office.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

*Addressing the pastor*

(name), seeing that you are called to ordained ministry by the grace of God and that (Local Church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines has been led to call you as pastor and teacher, are you willing to enter this covenant with its members who are one in Christ with us in the Conference?

#### **PASTOR**

I am willing, and I promise to serve this church faithfully, preaching and teaching the word of God, administering the sacraments, and fulfilling the pastoral office, according to the faith and order of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

*Addressing the congregation*

Members of (local church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines, will those who are able rise and affirm your covenant with your pastor and teacher?

Members of the church who are able stand for the remainder of the covenant.

#### **LOCAL CHURCH MEMBERS**

We, the members (local church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines, receive (name) as our pastor and teacher, promising to labor with him/her in the ministry of the gospel and to give him/her due honor and support.

We gather with her/him and with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines as a sign of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

*Addressing the association members*

Members of \_\_\_\_\_ Conference, will those who are able rise and affirm your covenant with (local church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines and its pastor and teacher?

Members of the Conference who are able may stand for the remainder of the covenant

#### **CONFERENCE MEMBERS**

We, the members of the \_\_\_\_\_ Conference of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, gather with you, the people and the pastor and teacher of (local church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines, as a sign of our covenant and in celebration of our mutual ministry in Christ's name.

#### **PRAYER OF INSTALATION**

All who are able may stand as a representative of the association prays in these or similar words.

#### **CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE**

Let us pray.

Everlasting God, you have called your servants to make promises before you; now enable us to keep our vows that we may remain steadfast in faith and fruitful in every good work. Bless, we pray, your servant (name) to whom the care of your people in this church is now committed. Pour out your Holy Spirit on him/her, on the

people of (local church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines, and all the churches of the Conference that our mutual ministry may be served with all faithfulness, diligence, and courage. Grant us the spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind. Make our ministry a means of awakening the careless, strengthening the faithful, comforting the afflicted, building up your church, and converting sinners to you. Guard us against the snares of temptation that we may be kept pure in heart, fervent in spirit, and valiant against evil. And at the last, by your grace, receive us in your eternal home, where, with you and the Holy Spirit, Christ reigns in glory, one God, for ever and ever.

ALL: AMEN.

## DECLARATION

### CONFERENCE REPRESENTATIVE

In the name of Jesus Christ and on behalf of the \_\_\_\_\_ Conference of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, I declare you duly installed as pastor and teacher of (local church) United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

ALL: THANKS BE TO GOD.

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means. The association representative(s) may make a gesture of Christian love to the newly installed person, such as handshake with appropriate words. The congregation and newly installed person may be seated

Separate charges or one common charge may be given to the pastor and congregation. The charge to the pastor and teacher may be presented dramatically by symbolically illustrating diverse pastoral functions. At the font and table, the sacramental ministries may be reviewed; at the pulpit, the preaching of the word. A key to the church building, a copy of the church constitution, a stole, a Bible, or other symbols may be used in a similar way.

If representatives from other Christian communions or from synagogues or other communities of faith have been invited and are present, a representative from among them may be given an opportunity to bring greetings to the local church and the newly installed pastor and teacher following the charge. The same courtesy may be extended to a representative of the civic community.

At the conclusion of this order, a hymn may be sung. A Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word continues, omitting the affirmation of faith. It is appropriate that the newly installed pastor serve communion and give the benediction.

## ORDER FOR INSTALLATION OF A CONFERENCE MINISTER/MODERATOR

This may be part of the Annual Conference Liturgy.

### A HYMN OF DEDICATION

### PRESENTATION OF THE CONFERENCE MINISTER-ELECT

Conference Secretary: Our beloved Bishop: the (name of conference) at its election held on (date of election) has chosen as its Conference Minister for the next two years, the Reverend (name of conference minister-elect) whom we now present to you for installation to the position of leadership in this Conference.

### THE CHARGE TO THE CONFERENCE MINISTER-ELECT

Bishop: Beloved in Christ, God by the Holy Spirit calls people to serve according to the gifts bestowed upon them. The Scriptures clearly state that gifts are varied: "Some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ. (Eph. 4:11-12). Therefore, the Church has included in its government not only the office of ministers, but also that of Conference Minister, to whom is committed the supervision of the churches and the administration of the

work of the Conference. To this important office, you have been elected by the Conference to serve as its leader for the next two years. We are thus gathered together to install you to this office of leadership, praying to God to anoint you for its sacred responsibilities.

### **VOWS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Bishop: I call upon you then to give answer to the following questions: will you diligently give yourself to the study of the Bible, to prayer and meditation for the edifying of your own soul?

Conference Minister-elect: I WILL.

Bishop: Will you seek to live your life according to the will of God, and to show yourself in all things, an example of faith and good works to others, to the glory of God?

Conference Minister-elect: I WILL, BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

Bishop: In accepting the office of Conference Moderator, do you promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof as set forth in the Constitution and By-laws of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines?

Conference Minister-elect: I DO, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Bishop: In the performance of your duties and in the promotion of the work of the Conference, will you deal justly and kindly with both the ministers and members, and will you be diligent in fostering the unity, peace, purity, and program of the Church?

Conference Minister-elect: I SOLEMNLY PROMISE TO DO SO.

Bishop: *To the whole Conference*

Do you, members of this Annual Conference, acknowledge and receive the Reverend (Name of the Conference Minister-elect) as your Conference Minister, and do you, for your part, promise to encourage and support him/her in the work of his/her office, according to the Word of God, and the Constitution and By-laws of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines?

People: WE DO, GOD HELPING US.

### **PRAYER OF INSTALLATION**

Conference Minister-elect kneeling; members of the family standing beside; Those who are able in the congregation may stand.

Bishop: Set apart, we beseech you, O Holy God, this your servant to the work to which you have called him/her by the voice of this Conference. Endue him/her with heavenly wisdom. Grant him/her your grace that he/she may be a good minister, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, administering the work in the fear and love of God. Give him/her that favor and influence with the people which come from following You. Give him/her such strength of body and mind that will keep him/her fit for untiring service. So fill him/her with your spirit that he/she may lead this Conference in service to the Church and community for the bringing of men and women to the saving power of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the world. Enable him/her to be faithful in all things so that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear he/she may receive the unfading crown of glory. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### **DECLARATION OF INSTALLATION**

Those who are able in the Congregation may stand.

Bishop: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, and by the authority vested in me as Bishop of the Jurisdiction, I hereby declare you duly installed as the Conference Minister of the (name of conference). As a token of our fellowship and of the seal of our support, I now give to you the right hand of fellowship in the name of the Holy God, the Son, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit.

## THE BLESSINGS

Bishop: May the Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you.

May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace, both now and forever more. Amen.

All: THANKS BE TO GOD

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn or some other means. Conference officers and representatives may extend their hand of Christian love to the newly installed Conference Minister.

## LITURGY FOR THE CONSECRATION OF A BISHOP OF THE CHURCH

This may be part of the Biennial Convention Liturgy.

### HYMN OF DEDICATION

### PRESENTATION OF THE BISHOP-ELECT

### OPENING WORDS

Presiding Bishop: For the spiritual guidance of its workers, the administration of its work, and the orderly conduct of its affairs, the Church has deemed it wise to elect certain individuals for the performance of special tasks and functions, one of which is that of a Bishop. To that office of the Reverend (name of bishop-elect) has been elected. We are now about to consecrate him/her in his/her office and to seek God's blessings upon him/her for his/her task.

Presiding Bishop: (name of the bishop-elect), at your ordination to the Christian ministry, you solemnly confessed your faith in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior according to the Holy Scripture, and pledged yourself to strive to advance the glory of the Triune God: Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Do you at this time re-affirm this confession?

Bishop-elect: I DO SO CONFESS WITH PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING TO GOD.

### CHARGE TO THE BISHOP-ELECT

Presiding Bishop: As Bishop you will have a two-fold responsibility: one pastoral, and the other administrative. As a pastor you will be a counselor and guide to pastors, exercising spiritual ministry to your brothers and sisters in the Lord. As an administrator you will assist in the oversight work of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, and also in guarding the life and faith of the church.

### VOWS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Presiding Bishop: In view of this awesome responsibility, I now charge you in the presence of God and before this community of faith to answer the following questions: Do you subscribe to the Constitution and By-laws of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, and promise to uphold its provisions with a view to maintain peace and purity of the Church?

Bishop-elect: I DO SO SUBSCRIBE, AND I PROMISE BY GOD'S GRACE TO FULFILL THESE RESPONSIBILITIES.

Presiding Bishop: Do you acknowledge your need of divine assistance in the work to which you have been called, through the action of your brothers and sisters; and do you promise to make diligent use of the means which God supplies for your help?

Bishop-elect: I DO SO ACKNOWLEDGE AND PROMISE, RELYING ON THE HELP OF ALMIGHTY GOD.

Presiding Bishop: Do you promise to carry out your work with dedication to the interest and welfare of the whole Church and for God's glory?

Bishop-elect: I DO SO PROMISE TO THE HONOR AND GLORY OF GOD.

Presiding Bishop: *Addressing the community of faith*

Do you, members of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, promise to encourage (name of bishop-elect) in his/her work for the Church and for God? Do you promise to follow him/her as he/she strives with the Holy Spirit's guidance and under the Constitution and By-laws to carry out the tasks entrusted to him/her? Do you promise to give him/her the respect to which his/her office entitles him/her? If such is your intention, will you stand up and raise your right hand and say, "We do promise".

Congregation: *All who are able may stand* WE DO PROMISE.

### **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

Bishop-elect kneeling; members of the family standing beside bishop; and those who are able in the congregation remain standing.

Presiding Bishop: Almighty and everlasting God, who governs all things in heaven and on earth, we are mindful that from the beginning you ordained for your church the ministry of reconciliation, calling some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastors and teachers, and some administrators, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry, and for the edification of the Body of Christ. We beseech you to look with mercy upon this your servant. Bless him/her as we consecrate him/her to the office of Bishop; and give him/her the spirit of understanding that he/she may truly serve as administrator in the work of your Church. Let the same mind be in him/her which was also in Christ Jesus. Increase his/her own faith in you, O God, that he/she may set an example for your people. By abiding in the fellowship of your Son, may his/her work be done in diligence and sincerity. May all that he/she says and does show forth the power of the Gospel for the salvation of people and for the glory of your Holy Name. Grant this, O God, for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ. Amen.

### **DECLARATION AS BISHOP**

Those who are able in the community may stand.

Presiding Bishop: (name of bishop elect), by virtue of the authority given to me and on behalf of the General Assembly, I now declare you Bishop of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines as signed in (name of jurisdiction). The blessing of God Almighty, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer be upon you. Amen.

### **PRESENTATION OF THE NEW BISHOP**

Presiding Bishop: Brothers and sisters in the Lord, may I now present to you the Reverend (name of the new bishop), our new bishop.

All: THANKS BE TO GOD.

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means. The conference representatives and jurisdictional officers present may make a gesture of Christian love to the newly installed bishop, such as a handshake with appropriate words. The congregation and the newly consecrated bishop may be seated.

*At the conclusion of this order, a hymn may be sung. A Service of the World and Sacrament or a Service of the Word continues. It is appropriate that the newly consecrated bishop serve communion and give the benediction.*



## ORDER FOR COMMISSIONING OF LAY PREACHERS

The service shall be held at the time and place arranged by the Conference Minister normally within the church in which the candidate holds membership, and shall be led by the minister(s) and others appointed by the Executive Committee.

The act of commissioning shall follow the preaching of the sermon and may be followed by the celebration of the Holy Communion.

The following order of service may be adapted to the local situation.

### THANKSGIVING

Our response to God is one of wonder at God's greatness,  
thanksgiving for new life, and an offering of ourselves to him.

Let us give thanks to God for the variety of gifts  
which enrich the life of our congregation:

For those who by the quality of their life help us to see God:  
We give thanks.

For those with the God-given gift of common sense:  
We give thanks.

For those with the sensitivity and understanding to see the needs of others:  
We give thanks.

For those who have the gift of listening with sympathy and acceptance:  
We give thanks.

For those with the clarity of mind and speech to speak out when plain speech is needed:  
We give thanks.

For those with talent to express their love in serving rather than in words:  
We give thanks.

For all those who give us direction through teaching, preaching and example:  
We give thanks,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### THE PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATE

The minister addresses the people:

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines provides for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them for the building up of the church.

The office of lay preacher is a ministry in which persons may participate in the proclamation of the gospel and in witness to Christian faith and experience.

The Church seeks to recognize those who are called by God to the work of preaching and who have the gift of the Spirit for this ministry. The Church provides for their training and accreditation.

In the act of accreditation and commissioning, lay preachers of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines are authorized to lead the worship and preach in the churches of the parishes in which they hold membership and in the churches of any other parishes to which they may be invited.

The candidate shall be presented to the presiding minister by a lay member of Presbytery, normally from the candidate's parish.

I present (name of lay preacher) to be recognized as a lay preacher of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. He/she has successfully completed the preparation required by the Church and has made

application through the Church Council to the Conference of (name of Conference) for accreditation as a lay preacher. The Conference Executive Committee has resolved to accredit him/her and so I present (name of lay preacher) now, to be commissioned.

The candidate shall make a brief statement.

### **THE VOWS**

The minister asks the candidate the following questions:

Do you, depending upon the gift of the Holy Spirit, confess anew Jesus Christ as Lord, acknowledging him to be the Son of God and Saviour of the world?

I DO.

Do you sincerely believe yourself to be called to the ministry of lay preacher?

I DO.

Will you seek to live and work within the faith and unity of the one holy, catholic and apostolic church?

I WILL

Do you receive the witness to Christ in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; and do you undertake to preach from these?

I DO.

Do you adhere to the Basis of Union of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines?

I DO.

Do you promise, in prayerful dependence on God's grace, to carry out the duties required of you?

I DO.

The members of the parish shall stand, and the minister asks them:

Do you, as members of the \_\_\_\_\_ parish, accept \_\_\_\_\_ as a lay preacher called by God?

WE DO.

Will you strive to be receptive to his/her preaching, coming together in expectant faith and genuine love, keeping yourselves from fault-finding and supporting him/her by encouragement and prayer?

WE WILL.

May God give you strength to fulfill these vows; and to God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus, from generation to generation for ever.

AMEN.

### **THE ACT OF ORDINATION**

The Candidate shall kneel and the following prayer shall be said by the Minister, with the laying on of hands:

(Name \_\_\_\_\_), receive the Holy spirit for the ministry of a Lay Preacher.

AMEN.

The Candidate shall rise and the Minister says:

In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ I now declare you to be a lay Preacher of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

The blessing of God, Creator, our Savior Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit, remain with you always. Amen.

A representative of the Board of Elders of Church Covenant shall present the lay Preacher's Certificate.

A Lay Preacher prays for his/her ministry and the Church's:

Al mighty God, you send your people to prepare the way before you. May the power of the Holy Spirit rest on all those who speak in your name.

Touch our hearts, enlighten our minds, and cleanse our lips.

Give us a clear vision of your will and purpose for the whole world.

Through our witness, call your church to loving discipline, joyful obedience and ready service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn or some other means.

— *Uniting Church Worship Services*  
*The Uniting Church in Australia*

## **LITURGY FOR THE CONSECRATION OF THE CHURCH'S TEAM MINISTRY**

### **ORGAN PRELUDE**

### **INTROIT**

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: We will bless the Lord at all times;

People: GOD'S PRAISE SHALL CONTINUALLY BE IN OUR MOUTHS.

Leader: Our souls make their boast in the Lord;

People: LET THE AFFLICTED HEAR AND BE GLAD.

Leader: O magnify the Lord with us,

People: AND LET US EXALT GOD'S NAME TOGETHER!

### **INVOCATION** *Leader*

O God, you are able to do for us exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, come to us now. Come to us and give us strength and peace and joy. Calm our minds. Refresh our spirits. Give us a new name, and a new song, and the power to serve you in newness of life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

### **UNISON PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Though our mouths were full of songs as the sea, and our tongues of exaltation as the multitudes of its waves, and our lips of praise as the wide-extended firmament; though our eyes shone with light like the sun and the moon, and our hands were spread forth like the eagles of heaven, and our feet were swift as hinds, we should still be unable to thank You and to bless Your name, O our God and God of our Mothers/ Fathers; for the one thousandth or one ten-thousandth part of bounties which Thou hast best bestowed upon our fathers and upon us. Amen.

— *From a Hebrew Morning Service*

### **THE CHILDREN'S ANTHEM**

### **PASTORAL PRAYER THE LORD'S PRAYER — CHORAL RESPONSE**

### **CONCERNS OF THE CHURCH LIFE**

### **HYMN OF PROCLAMATION**

### **READING OF THE SCRIPTURE**

## **SUNG WORD**

## **SPOKEN SERMON**

## **DEDICATION OF PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS**

Offertory Anthem

Doxology

## **HYMN OF DEDICATION**

## **CONSECRATION OF ELDERS**

Invite present elders and the new ones to come forward.

Minister: *Addressing the Congregation*

Dearly beloved: as in the Old Testament the Elders of Israel exercised an honorable office of government among the people of God, so also in the New Testament, Elders were ordained in the Church. Therefore, this Church from the beginning has included in her government. Elders chosen by the people to represent them and to participate in the ministry of the government, discipline, and worship in the church. These Elders, together with the Pastor, constitute the Board of Elders, to whom is committed authority to admit members, to regulate worship, to guard the doctrine, to further the Christian nurture, and promote the spiritual growth of all the members.

Thus it is the duty of the Elders to set the example of a godly life and moral conduct, and to work with the pastor in visitation, spiritual guidance and counseling.

These persons, having been chosen and having signified their willingness to serve, we do now, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, proceed to consecrate as Elders.

Question: Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the sufficient rule of faith and practice?

Answer: I DO.

Question: Do you confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Lord of all of our lives.

Answer: I DO.

Question: Do you accept the Office of Elder in this congregation, and promise faithfully to perform the duties thereof!

Answer: I DO.

*Pastor addresses the congregation*

Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive these brethren as Elders? Do you promise to yield to them all the respect, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord, to which their office, according to the Scriptures and the Constitution of this Church, entitles them? As many as are so minded, please stand.

The Pastor proceeds to consecrate the candidates by prayer. The Elder-Elects kneeling, the existing members of the Board of Elders lay their hands on the Elder-Elect.

Let us pray. Bless, O Lord, these your servants whom we set apart in obedience to your will for the work to which you have called them by the voice of this people. Endue them plenteously with your wisdom. Grant them your grace, that they may be full of the Holy Spirit and of faith to all good works. Give them favor and influence with the people. Make them faithful and worthy of service to you through your church. We pray in the Spirit of Christ. Amen.

Then the Pastor says

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the authority committed to me as a Pastor of the Church, I hereby declare you consecrated and installed in the Office of Elder.

I now charge you, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to be faithful in this office.

I also charge you Christian brethren, to pray for these Elders whom you have chosen to guide you in the Lord; and to render them all due cooperation, and support and to follow them in so far as you see them follow Christ.

Existing members of the Board of Elders taking the hands of the new Elders, say

We extend to you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in this office with us.

Existing elders return to seats

### **ACT OF DEDICATION FOR THE OTHER NEWLY ELECTED LEADERS OF THE CHURCH**

Invite other elected officers. Include elders.

Pastor: *addresses the leaders*

Brethren, it is a great honor to be chosen to lead in the work of our Church. It is also a grave responsibility. We trust that you will not only appreciate the honor Conferred upon you, but that you will also faithfully meet the duties and responsibilities thereof. May the work of this Church greatly prosper under your leadership, to the honor and praise of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, who called you to be His witnesses in your particular sphere of activity.

Pastor: Let us now take part in this Litany of Dedication.

Leaders: Receive us, O God, as we present ourselves to you.

Pastor: And be not conformed to this world; but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.

Leaders: Transform us, Most Holy Spirit, by the renewing of our minds.

Pastor: I bid everyone of you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned him.

Leaders: Teach us, O Christ, to walk in true humility of mind and soul, that we may more fully experience that measure of faith which God has dealt to each of us.

Pastor: You will now faithfully give answer to the following questions: Do you each accept the leadership to which you have been chosen?

Leaders: I do.

Pastor: *Addressing the congregation*

Do you gladly receive these as your leaders for the coming year?

Congregation: WE DO.

Pastor: Will you pledge your eager support to these leaders that together we may fulfill the ministries of our church?

Congregation: BY GOD'S GRACE WE WILL.

Pastor: As your Pastor, and in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, the Head of the Church, I do hereby declare you duly installed in your respective offices and set you apart for the coming year.

### **BENEDICTION**

### **THREE-FOLD AMEN**

## LITURGY FOR THE CONSECRATION OF MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH COUNCIL

This service is for the commissioning of members of Church Council following their election. It is intended to be part of an act of public worship and could appropriately follow the sermon and precede the celebration of the Holy Communion.

The service may be used by one congregation, or by the gathered congregations of the parish/district.

The presiding minister shall normally be a minister of the parish.

Scripture read during the service may include some of these passages:

Exodus 18:13-26	Romans 12:1-21	Luke 12:35-40
Ephesians 4:1-16	Luke 5:1-11	I Peter 5:1-4
John 15:1-11		

Sections printed in italics may be said by the whole congregation.

### THE SENTENCES

These may be used either early in the service or just prior to the commissioning.

There are diverse gifts:  
but it is the same Spirit who gives them.

There are different ways of serving God:  
but it is the same Lord who is served.

God works through people in different ways:  
but it is the same God who achieves divine purpose through them all.

Each one of us is given a gift by the Spirit:  
and there is no gift without its corresponding service.

There is one ministry of Christ: and in this ministry we all share.  
Together we are the Body of Christ: and individually members of it.

*(Based on 1 Cor. 12:4ff. and Basis of Union paragraph 13.)*

### THE PRESENTATION

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines provides for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them. Having sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are now to commission as members of the Church Council those whom we have elected to this ministry.

A representative of each congregation presents the candidates and says:

On behalf of the people of the \_\_\_\_\_ Congregation, I present \_\_\_\_\_ to be commissioned as members of the Church Council (for a further term).

The candidates stand together in a convenient place and the presiding minister addresses them:

Brothers and sisters, *(or name them individually)*

God has called you to serve Jesus Christ in this particular ministry.

The responsibilities of the Church Council are:

- to bear witness to that unity that is both Christ's gift and will;
- to encourage each member to participate in the total life of the church, and to share in the ministry of the church to the community;
- to plan and supervise joint activities of the congregations in worship, mission, service and administration;
- to maintain all necessary and appropriate relationships with the Conference and other judicatories/councils of the church.

## THE VOWS

Do you, depending upon the gift and power of the Holy Spirit, confess anew Jesus Christ as Lord, acknowledging him to be the Son of God and Saviour of the world?

I DO.

Will you seek to live and work within the faith of one holy catholic (universal) and apostolic church, as that faith is described in the Basis of Union of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines?

I WILL.

Will you accept this responsibility, committing yourself to follow Christ, to love your neighbor, and to work for the reconciling of the world; will you serve the people, using your energy, intelligence, imagination and love, relying and rejoicing in God's grace and promises?

I Will.

The presiding minister invites the people to stand and answer the following questions:

Do you, the members of this congregation/parish receive \_\_\_\_\_ as parish councilors under God, to lead you in the way of Jesus Christ?

WE DO.

Will you encourage them in love and support them in their ministry, serving with them the one Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the church?

WE WILL.

May God give you strength to fulfill these vows; and to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus from generation to generation for ever.

AMEN.

## ACT OF COMMISSIONING

The presiding minister names and prays for each candidate in turn. This prayer may be accompanied by the laying on of hands:

Lord, send your Holy Spirit upon your servant (name of members) for ministry in the Church Council of your church.

AMEN.

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I now declare you to be members of the (name of local church) Church Council of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

The blessing of God, Creator, our Savior Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit, remain with you always.

AMEN.

The ministers of the Word and other members of the Church Council welcome the new members with the right hand of fellowship.

Let us pray.

The newly commissioned members pray for their ministry and the church's:

God of grace, you call us all to ministry as ambassadors for Christ, trusting us with the message of reconciliation: give us understanding and courage, patience and grace, that with joy we may declare your wonderful deeds and show your love to the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

## LITURGY FOR THE ORDINATION OF CHURCH ELDERS I

This should be a part of a regular worship service.

### HYMN OF DEDICATION

### PRESENTATION OF ELDERS-ELECT

The pastor or another representative of the local church may name the officers or the settings of ministry and the people to be recognized in the following or similar manner.

### OPENING WORDS

Minister: Dearly beloved, as in the Old Testament the Elders of Israel exercised an honorable office of government among the people of God, so also in the New Testament, Elders were ordained in the Church. As Paul said, "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching" (I Tim. 5:17). Therefore, our Church from the beginning has included in her government elders chosen by the people to represent them and to participate in the ministry of government, discipline, and worship in the Church. These elders, together with the Pastor, constitute the Board of Elders, to whom is committed authority to admit and exclude members, to regulate worship, to guard the doctrine, to further the Christian nurture, and promote the spiritual growth of all the members. Thus, it is the duty of the elders to set the example of a godly life and moral conduct, and to work with the Pastor in visitation, spiritual guidance and counseling. These persons (mention their names) have been chosen and having signified their willingness to serve, we do now, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, proceed to consecrate.

### VOWS OF FAITH AND RESPONSIBILITY

Minister: *Addressing the new elders.*

Friends, God has called you by the voice of the church to serve Jesus Christ in a special way. You know who we are and what we believe in, and you understand the work which you have been chosen. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of the world, and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer?

Elders-elect: I DO.

Minister: Do you accept the Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the church universal, and God's Word to you?

Elders-elect: I DO.

Minister: Will you be leaders of this church in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scriptures, and will you be a friend among your co-workers in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?

Elders-elect: I WILL

Minister: Will you govern the way you live, by following the Lord Jesus Christ, loving neighbors, working for the reconciliation of the world, and will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination and love?

Elders-elect: I WILL.

Minister: And now as elected elders, will you be faithful, watching over the people, providing for their worship and instructions? Will you share in the government and discipline, serving in the



sacraments of the church, and, in your ministry, will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

Elders-elect: I WILL, SO HELP ME GOD.

Minister: *Addressing, the congregation*

Do you members of this church, accept these persons set apart as church elders, chosen by God through the voice of the congregation, to lead you in the way of Jesus Christ?

People: WE DO.

Minister: *Addressing the congregation*

Do you agree to encourage them, to respect their decisions, and to follow as they guide you, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is the Head of the Church?

People: WE DO.

### **THE ACT OF ORDINATION**

New elders kneeling; minister and current elders laying their hands on the heads of the new elders

Minister: Let us Pray:

Holy God, in every age you have chosen servants to speak your Word and lead your loyal people. We thank you for these men and women whom you have called to serve you. Give them special gifts to do their special work and fill them with the Holy Spirit, so they may have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, and be faithful disciples as long as they shall live. Grant them now your blessings, O Lord. In your name and in accordance with your will, by prayer with the laying on of hands, ordain them to the office of church elders. We pray in the Spirit of Christ. Amen.

### **RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP**

Minister: *Addressing the newly ordained elders*

In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, the Head of the Church, we do hereby declare you duly ordained and set you apart for the holy services of church elders. We now charge you, in the name of Jesus Christ, to be faithful.

*Addressing the congregation*

I also charge you, dear brothers and sisters, to pray for these your chosen elders, to guide you in the Lord, and to render them all due cooperation and support, and to follow them in so far as you see them follow Christ.

### **BLESSINGS**

Minister: And now, the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

All: AMEN.

The congregation may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or other means. The representatives of the association and local church may extend the hand of Christian love to the newly ordained elders.

At the conclusion, the people and the newly ordained elders may be seated.

## LITURGY FOR THE ORDINATION OF CHURCH ELDERS II

This service is for the commissioning of elders following their election. It is intended to be part of an act of public worship and could appropriately follow the sermon and precede the celebration of Holy Communion.

The service may be used by one congregation, or by the gathered congregations of the parish.

The presiding minister shall normally be a minister of the parish.

Scripture read during the service may include some of these passages:

Exodus 18:13-26	Romans 12:1-21	Luke 12:35-40
Ephesians 4:1-16	Luke 5:1-11 1	Peter 5:1-4
John 15:1-11		

### THE SENTENCES

These may be used either early in the service or just prior to the commissioning.

There are diverse gifts:  
but it is the same Spirit who gives them.

There are different ways of serving God:  
but it is the same Lord who is served.

God works through people in different ways:  
but it is the same God, who achieves his purpose through them all.

Each one of us is given a gift by the Spirit:  
and there is no gift without its corresponding service.

There is one ministry of Christ:  
and in this ministry we all share.

Together we are the Body of Christ:  
and individually members of it.

*(Based on I Cor. 12:4ff and Basis of Union paragraph 13.)*

### THE PRESENTATION

The United Church of Christ in the Philippines provides for the exercise by men and women of the gifts God bestows upon them. Having sought the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we are now to commission as elders those whom we have elected to this ministry.

A representative of each congregation presents the candidates and says:

On behalf of the people of the \_\_\_\_\_ Congregation, I present \_\_\_\_\_ to be commissioned as elder (for a further term).

The candidates stand together in a convenient place and the presiding minister addresses them:

Brothers and sisters, *(or names individually)*

God has called you to serve Jesus Christ in this particular ministry.

The responsibilities of the Council of Elders are:

- to share with the minister in building up the congregation in faith and love;
- to visit members regularly, and to nurture them in their growth in grace;
- to share with the minister in the conduct of worship, the administration of the sacraments, and the spiritual oversight of the congregation.

## THE VOWS

Do you, depending upon the gift and power of the Holy Spirit, confess anew Jesus Christ as Lord, acknowledging him to be the Son of God and Savior of the world?

I DO.

Will you seek to live and work within the faith of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, as that faith is described in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

I WILL.

Will you accept this responsibility, committing yourself to follow Christ, to love your neighbor, and to work for the reconciling of the world; will you serve the people, using your energy, intelligence, imagination and love, relying on God's grace and rejoicing in the Lord's promises?

I WILL.

The presiding minister invites the people to stand and answer the following questions:

Do you, the members of this congregation/parish receive \_\_\_\_\_ as elders under God, to lead you in the way of Jesus Christ?

WE DO.

Will you encourage them in love and support them in their ministry, serving with them the one Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the church?

WE WILL.

May God give you strength to fulfill these vows; and to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus from generation to generation for ever.

AMEN.

## ACT OF COMMISSIONING

The presiding minister names and prays for each candidate in turn. This prayer may be accompanied by the laying on of hands:

Lord, send your Holy Spirit upon your servant \_\_\_\_\_ (name) for the ministry of an elder in your church.

Amen.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I now declare you to be elders in the \_\_\_\_\_ Congregation of \_\_\_\_\_ of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines.

The blessing of God, Creator, our Savior Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit, remain with you always.

Amen.

The ministers of the Word and other elders welcome the new elders with the right hand of fellowship.

Let us pray.

The newly commissioned elders pray for their ministry and the church's:

God of grace, you call us all to ministry as ambassadors for Christ, trusting us with the message of reconciliation: give us understanding and courage, patience and grace, that with joy we may declare your wonderful deeds and show our love to the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means.

## LITURGY FOR THE CONSECRATION OF CHURCH SCHOOL WORKERS/TEACHER-FACILITATORS!

### PRESENTATION

The workers in the Christian education program come to the front or the chancel during the singing of the hymn preceding this service.

Minister: *Addressing the people being dedicated*

Today you stand before this congregation as our representatives engaged in the ministry of learning and teaching. Your activities are an extension of Jesus' ministry of teaching.

Just as Jesus showed love and care for all by helping them learn the principles of the faith, you too are expected to show love and concern for those whom you help. By example and word Jesus showed his disciples what it meant to be a follower of his; so you must show by your example and words the same kind of teaching. You are the church in action by the work you perform each week.

Do you accept this ministry as your participation in helping others develop their Christian faith and witness?

Christian Education Workers: As workers in the Christian Education and Nurture Ministry we accept our participation as ministers of the church in helping others grow in their Christian faith and witness. We will do our best with God's help.

Minister: *Addressing the congregation*

Members of the church, will you accept these persons as your workers in the ministry of learning and teaching? Will you support them, encourage them, provide for them, and finally honor them, as they represent you in this extension of the work of Jesus?

Congregation: WE ACCEPT THESE PERSONS AS OUR REPRESENTATIVES IN THE WORK OF JESUS' MINISTRY OF TEACHING TO OTHER PERSONS. WE WILL SUPPORT, ENCOURAGE, PROVIDE FOR, AND HONOR THEM AS THEY CARRY OUT THIS WORK WITH US AND IN OUR MIDST WITH GOD'S HELP.

Minister: *All who are able may stand*

Let us pray together.

Minister and Congregation: GOD, WE ASK FOR YOUR HELP TODAY TO ENABLE US TO JOIN TOGETHER IN THIS IMPORTANT MINISTRY OF TEACHING. GUIDE OUR ACTIONS, DIRECT OUR THOUGHTS, AND INSPIRE OUR HOPES, FOR WE PRAY WITH YOUR HELP WE COULD SERVE ONLY AS JESUS SERVED AND TEACH US JESUS TAUGHT, IN HIS NAME. AMEN.

Minister: The benediction of the Holy God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit go with you, enable you to do great things, and inspire you to bring more love and deeds of faith into being, both now and in the future. Amen.

The congregation may show approval and support by applause, a hymn, or other means. Representatives of the local church may greet those dedicated. At the conclusion, the participants may return to their places in the congregation.

— Richard L. Cookson From *The Church School*, July 1977.

## LITURGY FOR THE CONSECRATION SERVICE OF A DIRECTOR/MINISTER OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

This rite ought to be embodied in a regular public worship service. At the appointed place in the service, the following may be used:

### THE PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATE

Here may be spoken brief words by the chair of the Board or Committee on Christian Education, or the chair of the Personnel Committee, introducing to the congregation the new Director or Minister of Christian Education, such as:

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church, we are now to receive as one commissioned to serve as Director/Minister of Christian Education in the *(name of church)*, *(name of candidate)*. He/She has been approved and recommended to serve by the *(name of committee)*. I now instruct that he/she be duly installed to service in this office.

### SCRIPTURE SENTENCES *(Minister)*

HEAR the words of the Lord: the Lord our God is one Lord; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words which I commend you this day shall be upon your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your children, and you shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down and when you rise. ('Deut. 6:4-7)

### VOWS OF COMMISSIONING

Minister: Jesus said, "Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of God and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember; I will be with you always, to the end of the age." (Matt. 28:19-20)

Do you take this as your commission, and your sole purpose for entering into the ministry of Christian Education?

Candidate: I DO, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Minister: Every Scripture inspired of God is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that anyone of God may be complete, perfectly equipped for every good work.

Will you diligently read and study the Holy Scriptures and faithfully teach the same to others to the best of your ability?

Candidate: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY GUIDE.

Minister: The task of Christian Education is not merely the imparting of information but the awakening and inspiring of the whole person to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all of life; as Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man, so ought all persons to grow.

Do you accept this as the purpose of your office as Director/(Minister) of Christian Education in this church?

Candidate: I DO, GOD BEING MY TEACHER.

### CHARGE TO THE CANDIDATE

Minister: I beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, giving diligence to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

We exhort you to encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all things; hold fast that which is good; refrain from every form of evil. Give heed to reading, study to show yourself a worker approved of God, rightly handling the Word of life.

Fight the good fight of faith. Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. If you put in mind these things, you shall be a good minister of Jesus Christ.

#### **CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION**

Minister: The privilege and responsibility of guiding persons in this congregation, as well as those who stand outside these walls, in the Christian way is not the duty and task of the Director/Minister of Christian Education alone. Our new Director/Minister of Christian Education, (name), has promised to do what he/she can do, but his/her best efforts will fail in fulfillment unless they are supplemented and supported by the wholehearted and loyal cooperation of each of our families, members, officers and of our church as a whole. Recognizing that the responsibility for Christian upbringing for all persons rests upon all of us, will you then join the church staff (or ministers) in pledging your prayers, support in all ways, and a rededication of yourselves to a vital teaching ministry?

Congregation: We will, God being our Guide, Teacher, and Helper. Amen.

#### **THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

The candidate shall kneel in front of the minister while the minister lifts his/ her hand in blessing over him/her saying:

ALL glory, praise and thanksgiving to you, our God, for you have revealed your love for your children in sending your beloved Son for their redemption, and have from the beginning raised up chosen *servants* to tell abroad the message of your love.

We give thanks for the devotion of this your servant whom we now, in your name, set apart for the ministry of teaching and guiding others to your grace. Accept his/her love and devotion; and increase in him/her the gifts of your Holy Spirit, that he/she may commend by teaching an example of the love of Jesus Christ, Give him/her understanding, sympathy, patience; guard him/her in body and soul; be his/her strength and joy; cheer him/her with your continual presence; and make him/ her glad with the fruits of his/her ministry.

And we pray that you will help us who join in this act of installation and consecration to encourage him/her in his/her ministry and to bear him/her up continually with prayer and assistance, and to share in this gracious ministry with him/her as we all endeavor to build living faith in the lives of all who come within our Christian ministry; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

#### **DECLARATION OF INSTALATION**

The candidate shall stand.

Minister: In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Head of the Church, by the authority of the (*name of church*), I do now declare you installed as Director/Minister of Christian Education of this church.

May the rich blessings of God, Son, and Holy Spirit be upon you and abide with you to effect a gracious and fruitful ministry in Christian Education for our people of this Church and this community.

#### **PRESENTATION TO THE CONGREGATION**

The candidate shall face the congregation.

Minister: Members of the household of faith, receive your new Director/Minister of Christian Education. And God grant us all fruitful ministry together. Amen.

## **LITURGY FOR THE CONSECRATION OF CHURCH SCHOOL OFFICERS AND TEACHERS/STUDY FACILITATORS**

This may be done as part of the regular worship service on Sunday morning

### **HYMN OF DEDICATION**

### **PRESENTATION OF CHURCH SCHOOL OFFICERS AND TEACHERS/ STUDY FACILITATORS**

Addressing the Congregation

Minister: Sisters and brothers, we are now inducting into service the officers and teachers of our Church School for the coming year. By this recognition, we desire to magnify the importance of the work of the Church School in the life of the entire congregation and to impress upon those chosen the value and dignity of their high calling in the ministry of teaching the children, youth and adults of the church and leading them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and to more meaningful membership in the church.

Addressing the Officers and Teachers/Study Facilitators

Minister: My dear friends, you have been greatly honored by being elected (or appointed) to your offices and positions in our Church School. Through it, the Church extends its teaching ministry to the children, youth and adult members who would find a truly meaningful and significant life centering in God. The Church has committed to the Church School a distinctive task - to give an understanding of the part God has in the life of people as this is revealed in the Bible; to make clear and convincing the beliefs which make up the Christian faith; to enable young and old to see what is the Christian way of life; and to help them to enter intelligently, consciously and purposely into that way of life through the help of the Holy Spirit.

Minister: Do you accept this task and responsibility of the teaching ministry and do you now offer yourselves wholeheartedly?

Officers/Teachers: YES, WE ACCEPT THE CALL TO THE TEACHING MINISTRY, RELYING ON GOD TO HELP US.

### **VOWS OF FAITH AND SERVICE**

Minister: Now that you have offered yourselves to this ministry as officers and teachers and in order that all may know that you are mindful of the responsibilities, as well as the privileges of this service, you will answer the following questions: Do you believe and feel in your hearts that you are called of God and of the Church to give yourselves to the work and service of leadership and teaching?

Officers/Teachers: I DO.

Minister: Do you accept the Holy Scriptures as the Word of God, and will you be faithful to them in your life and teaching?

Officers/Teachers: I DO AND I WILL.

Minister: Do you humbly promise that you will take seriously all known duties and responsibilities revolving upon you as a worker in the Church School, that you will endeavor to be regular in attendance, diligent in preparation, and loyal to your co-workers in the Church, seeking at all times to promote true Christian nurture and fellowship among those committed to your care?

Officers/Teachers: I DO, GOD HELPING ME.

### **CHARGE TO PARENTS/GUARDIAN'S OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH**

Do you as parents and members of the family of these children, being their natural and first nurturers, promise to support the efforts of these our Church School officers and teachers in teaching and nurturing your

children? Will you do your part in teaching, guiding, nurturing and administering them in the way of the Lord at home in the best of your capacities?

Parents/Guardians: I PROMISE AND I WILL ENDEAVOR TO TEACH AND NURTURE MY CHILDREN/WARDS.

### **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

Officers/Teachers kneeling, those who are able in the congregation may stand

Minister: Gracious and loving God, we thank you for these your servants who have given themselves to the work of Christian teaching and leadership among the members of this church. Bestow upon them the grace of your Holy Spirit, and grant them such endowments of mind and spirit that shall equip them for their task. Give them a full measure of your grace and wisdom. Comfort and strengthen them in times of difficulty and adversity, and crown their labors with plenteous harvest. And to Your Name be all blessing and glory through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **DECLARATION OF INSTAUTION** *Officers/Teachers standing*

Minister: In the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord and Teacher of the Church, and in behalf of this congregation, I declare you duly installed in the various offices to which you have been called.

### **CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION** *Officers/Teachers face congregation*

Minister: Beloved members of this Church, receive and consider these co-workers as servants of Jesus Christ. Accord them due respect and honor. Pray for them and support them in their tasks and responsibilities of teaching and leadership. Encourage them by your willing cooperation and the strong influence of your homes. Consider yourselves co-workers with them in any of the important ministries of the Church.

### **PRAYER AND BLESSINGS** *Those who are able in the congregation may stand*

Minister: Merciful and loving God, we praise you for the high calling of Christian teaching. We thank you that you have called these your servants to this blessed and rewarding ministry in your Church. We beseech You to qualify them more and more, by your Holy Spirit and their efforts, for the peculiar work and privilege of un-folding the truth and power of your Word. Give them understanding of your will and ways. Give them the ability to speak words that will open the minds and hearts of young and old; endue them with wisdom, patience, courage and love. May the joy of Christ be their abiding reward. Unite us all in your service for the triumph of your Kingdom upon the earth; through him whose service is perfect freedom, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **DECLARATION**

Church representative: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the (local church), I declare that you are installed in your respective positions.

All: THANKS BE TO GOD.

After the singing the people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, a canticle or other means. The representatives of the associations and the local church may extend the hand of Christian love to the newly installed officers. The congregation and the newly installed officers may be seated.



## LITURGY FOR THE CONSECRATION OF CHURCH ORGANIZATION OFFICERS AND/OR STAFF

This should be done in the context of a worship service preferably after the Proclamation of the Word.

### HYMN OF DEDICATION

### PRESENTATION OF THE OFFICERS

The Secretary of the organization shall announce the names of the officers to be installed. The Officiating Officer shall ask them to come forward as their names are called.

### ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION

Minister: Brothers and sisters, we are about to install these newly elected officers to their respective offices. But before we proceed, let us invoke God's blessings on this service.

### PRAYER

Minister: Loving God, it is good to know that our place is to serve. Thank you for calling us to be active participants in the life and witness of your church. Grant us now your blessings as we offer to you ourselves in praise and thanksgiving. In Christ's Name. Amen.

### ADDRESS TO THE OFFICERS

Minister: Dearly beloved, it has pleased the \_\_\_\_\_ to elect you to important positions of leadership for the ensuing term. We are confident that they acted advisedly and wisely in electing you and that you will prove yourselves the right persons to be elected. It is a great honor to be chosen to administer the work of the \_\_\_\_\_. It is also a grave responsibility. We trust that you will not only appreciate the honor conferred upon you, but that you will also faithfully meet the duties and responsibilities thereof. Thus, the work of the \_\_\_\_\_ may greatly prosper under your administration, to the honor and praise of our Saviour, Jesus Christ who called you to be his witnesses in your particular spheres of activity. I call upon you to consider the words of the Master who said: You know that those who are supposed to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of Man also came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:42-45.).

### COVENANT OF FIDELITY

Minister: *for the church staff or elected officers*

You will now faithfully give answers to the following questions: Do you accept the office to whom you have been elected/chosen?

Officers: I DO.

Minister: Do you promise, the Lord Jesus Christ being your helper, to faithfully fulfill your duties and responsibilities?

Officers: I DO.

Minister: *addressing the congregation*

Do you gladly receive these as your officers for the ensuing term?

People: WE DO.

Minister: Will you pledge your eager support to the work of the Lord through you under the leadership of these officers/ staff whom you have elected/chosen to office?

People: BY GOD'S GRACE, WE WILL. *Those that are able in the congregation may stand.*

### ACT OF INSTALLATION

Minister: As Minister of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, and in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, the Head of the Church, I do hereby declare you duly installed in your respective offices and set you apart for the holy services of these offices for the ensuing term.

**PRAYER OF INSTALLATION** *Officers kneeling if able, and those that are able in the congregation may remain standing.*

Minister: Holy and most merciful God, who has chosen your church to make your name glorious, and has received us into its blessed fellowship; we thank you that we may be fellow laborers with you. We commend to you these your servants whom we have installed before you. We thank you for their devotion to you, and for this high moment of dedication to special ministry in your Church. Imbue them afresh with the word of your grace and with your spirit that they may be thoroughly furnished for every good work. Keep strong in body, pure in heart, unselfish in service, lowly in personal claim, and zealous always for advancing your kingdom on earth. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

### DECLARATION

The Minister or another representative of the local church may declare that the act of installation or recognition has occurred. Individual positions may be named.

Leader: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the people of (local Church), I rejoice to announce:

(1) for all together: "You are installed in your respective positions."

or

(2) for individual positions: "You are installed as (position).

or

(3) for individual ministries: "You are recognized and affirmed in your ministry in (setting).

May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace, both now and forevermore. Amen.

or

May the God of love strengthen us in our love for others.

May the Son who shared his life grant us grace that we may share our life.

And may the Holy Spirit indwelling us empower us to be only and always for others.:. Amen.

All: "THREEFOLD AMEN"

The people may show their approval and support by applause, a song of canticle, or some other means. The representatives of the associations and the local church may extend the hand of Christian love to the newly installed officers.

# LITURGY FOR COMMISSIONING FOR MISSION

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: O Lord, open our lips,  
People: AND WE SHALL PROCLAIM YOUR PRAISE.  
Leader: Proclaim the salvation of our God, day by day.  
People: TELL OF THE GLORY OF THE LORD TO ALL NATIONS.  
Leader: God is great and worthy of all praise,  
People: TO BE FEARED ABOVE ALL GODS.

## COLLECT

God of all nations: your kingdom has come in *Jesus* of Nazareth, and grows among us day by day. Send us into the world to preach good news, so that all may believe, be rescued from sin, and become your faithful people; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

## THE READING OF THE WORD

Isaiah 61:1-3  
Acts 1:6-8

## PRESENTATION OF PERSONS IN MISSION

### WELCOMING OF PERSONS IN MISSION

In the spirit of partnership with churches all over the world, we express our need for receiving and learning from others. We welcome those who are sent to us by other churches, and encourage those who come to teach, challenge, and witness as Christians in this land. We covenant to be open to receive through you gifts God has given.

### PRESENTATION OF PERSONS IN MISSION TO OTHER LANDS/PLACES/ WORK

### SENDING OF PERSONS IN MISSION

In that same spirit of partnership, we send brothers and sisters to other churches in other lands to witness for and serve Jesus Christ. The United Church of Christ in the Philippines, has determined to appoint you as missionaries of the gospel of Christ, as Fraternal Workers, International Subsistence Service Workers, Volunteers in Mission, Contract Associates, and Specialists in Mission; and in the name of the whole church, we pray God's blessing upon you as you go.

### QUESTIONS TO PERSONS IN MISSION

In accepting this welcome and these appointments, have you been persuaded to seek these positions by love for God and a sincere desire to promote God's glory in the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Response: I HAVE BEEN SO PERSUADED.

Do you accept the tasks to which you have been assigned, pledging your faithfulness to maintaining truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the church in whatever place or situation?

Response: I DO SO PROMISE.

In so far as your call is to serve in a church other than your own, do you commit yourself as a partner in obedience to the Christ of the one church and with other Christians, confident that the One who began the good work among us all will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ?

Response: I DO SO COMMIT MYSELF.

In humble reliance upon divine grace, do you engage to be faithful and diligent in all you do, exemplifying Christian love for those among whom you labor in hearty cooperation with your colleagues in ministry?

Response: I DO SO ENGAGE, RELYING ON GOD'S GRACE.

### **CHARGE TO PERSONS IN MISSION**

Hear these words from the apostle Paul:

At all times make it your aim to do good to one another and to all people.

Be joyful always, pray at all times, be thankful in all circumstances.

This is what God wants of you, wherever you are, in your life in Christ Jesus.

### **CHARGE TO THE PEOPLE**

As these persons whom we have set apart go forth in Christ's name to other places, you, too, as members of the body to which they belong, go with them — in spirit and in prayers. Continue constantly in your supplication to God on their behalf and the mission they are to under-take. And may God bless you all in your support and union with them in the Holy Spirit. So be it.

### **PRAYER FOR THE CHURCH**

Leader: As you sent disciples into every land, O God, gather them now, from the ends of the earth, into one fellowship that chooses your purpose and praises your name, in one faith, hope and love.

People: AMEN.

Leader: Make us one, Lord, in our eagerness to speak good news and set all captives free.

People: GIVE US YOUR HOLY SPIRIT.

Leader: Make us one, Suffering Servant, in concern for the poor, the hurt, and the downtrodden, to show them your love.

People: GIVE US YOUR HOLY SPIRIT.

Leader: Make us one, Christ, in worship, breaking bread together and singing your praise with a single voice.

People: GIVE US YOUR HOLY SPIRIT.

Leader: Give us your Holy Spirit, so we may have among us the same mind that was in Christ Jesus; and proclaim him to the world, until all acknowledge the powerful reign of Christ in their own lives and in all the world, to the glory of your name.

People: AMEN.

### **HYMN OF AFFIRMATION**

### **BENEDICTION**

Leader: Go in peace to serve God and neighbor in all that you do.

People: WE ARE SENT IN CHRIST'S NAME.

Leader: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

People: AMEN.

# LITURGY FOR THE INSTALLATION OF A NEW PRESIDENT/DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTION

## PRELUDE

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN** *All who are able may stand*

## CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: Open your hearts, O people of God! Open your ears and listen to the Good News!

People: GLORY BE TO GOD THE CREATOR FOR GOD'S LOVE ENDURES FOREVER!

Leader: God leads the peoples of the world with justice and righteousness.

Men: God's kindness is great toward us; God forgives all our iniquities.

Women: God redeems us from destruction, and showers us with tender mercies.

All: GOD IS MERCIFUL TO US! LET US THEREFORE OFFER OURSELVES TO GOD AS LIVING SACRIFICES,  
DEDICATED TO SERVICE AND OBEDIENT TO THE DIVINE WILL

Leader: O worship God with me, and let us exalt God's Name together!

All: *to be sung*

"HOLY, HOLY, HOLY! LORD GOD ALMIGHTY!  
ALL THY WORKS SHALL PRAISE THY NAME IN EARTH AND SKY AND SEA;  
HOLY, HOLY, HOLY? MERCIFUL AND MIGHTY!  
GOD IN THREE PERSONS, BLESSED TRINITY." AMEN.

**INVOCATION** *All who are able may stand*

Leader: Our help is in God the Creator,  
People: WHO MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH.  
Leader: God is near to all who call upon the Holy one.  
People: TO ALL WHO CALL UPON GOD IN TRUTH.  
All: COME AND BE WITH US NOW, O PARENT GOD. TEACH US TO BE YOUR CHILDREN. MAKE US  
OFFER OURSELVES TO YOU SO THAT WE MAY KNOW WHAT YOU WANT US TO BE AND WHAT  
YOU WANT US TO DO. MAKE US TO LEARN FROM YOU SO THAT WE MAY GROW IN OUR LOVE  
FOR YOU, AND BE EMPOWERED TO SERVE YOUR PEOPLE. PREPARE US NOW, THROUGH YOUR  
SPIRIT, TO LISTEN TO WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY TO US, AND TO WORSHIP YOU WITH JOY AND  
THANKSGIVING. IN THE NAME OF JE-SUS CHRIST OUR SAVIOUR, WE PRAY. AMEN.

## A HYMN OF PRAISE OR THANKSGIVING

## RECOGNITION AND WELCOMING OF GUESTS

## WORDS OF GREETINGS

## AN ANTHEM OR CHORAL PROCLAMATION

**READING OF THE SCRIPTURES** *All who are able may stand*

Old Testament:  
New Testament:

## A PRAYER HYMN

## CALL AND RESPONSE

Reading of the Actions of the Board of Trustees  
Introduction of the New President/Director

Presentation of the New President/Director  
Turning Over of the Key of Responsibility/other symbols

## THE INVESTITURE CEREMONY

### The Address

Minister/Installing Officer: One of the primary tasks of the Church is to educate people. Institutions of learning have been established by the Church in order to fulfill this task. For the administration of the work of this school and for the orderly conduct of its affairs, the Church has deemed it necessary to elect through the Board of Trustees certain individuals for the performance of special tasks and functions, one of which is that of a president. To that office, \_\_\_\_\_ has been elected. As we consecrate \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ office, let us seek God's blessings upon \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ task.

### The Covenant of Faith

Minister/Installing Officer: Dearly beloved, you have been called to administer the life and work of (name of school). Do you accept the office to which you have been elected?

President-Elect: I DO.

Minister: Do you promise, the Lord Jesus Christ being your helper, to faithfully fulfill your duties and responsibilities?

President-Elect: I DO.

Minister/Installing Officer: *Addressing the whole school community.* Do you gladly receive \_\_\_\_\_ as your president for the ensuing term?

People: WE DO.

Minister/Installing Officer: Will you pledge your eager support to the work and mission of the (the-school) under the leadership of your new president?

People: BY GOD'S GRACE, WE WILL.

Minister/Installing Officer: We, now, through the use of symbols express the length and breadth and height and depth of the president's calling and task.

## PRESENTATION OF THE SYMBOLS

### The Vestment

Presenter: The academic gown symbolizes God and embracing presence — a companionship that empowers, sustains, and transforms. Where the presence of God is proclaimed and experienced there is change in the self, in the school, in the church, and in society as well.

### The Cap and Academic Collar

Presenter: These cap and academic collar symbolize wisdom and knowledge. The Book of Proverbs says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 1:7)

### The Mace

Presenter: The mace is a symbol of authority. It reminds us of what Jesus said to his disciples, "If one of you wants to be great, you must be the servant of the rest; and if one of you wants to be first, you must be the slave of all." (Mark 10:43).

### The Bible With the Newspaper

Presenter: The Scripture says, "No one lives by bread alone, but needs every word that God speaks" (Matt. 4:4). An administrator of a church-related institution must be guided by the Word of God, the Bible, and the word of people, by mouth or texts.

### The Torch

Presenter: This torch symbolizes light. Jesus our Savior said, You are light of the world... let your light shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your God in heaven' (Matt. 5:14-16).

### The Staff

Presenter: This staff symbolizes the leading and guiding presence of God as a shepherd. The Psalmist says, "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4).

## **THE ACT OF INSTALLATION**

Minister or Installing Officer: By virtue of the authority given to me, and in behalf of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, I now declare you duly installed as the new president of \_\_\_\_\_. May the blessings of God, Jesus Christ our Savior, and Holy Spirit be upon you, and prosper you in your work. Amen.

## **THE OATH OF OFFICE**

President-Elect: I, \_\_\_\_\_, having been elected President of \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby solemnly pledge that I will faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties and responsibilities of the office to which I am elected by the church through the Board of Trustees. I do promise to uphold the Constitution and By-laws of \_\_\_\_\_ and to pursue the achievement of its mission objectives. I do swear that I will respectfully abide by the rules and regulations of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Republic of the Philippines. So help me God.

## **MUSIC INTERLUDE/CHORAL CHALLENGE**

*President-elect kneeling, members of the family standing beside*

## **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

## **SONG OF DEDICATION**

## **A LITANY ON LEADERSHIP**

Students: Blessed is the leader who has not sought the high places, but who has been drafted into service because of his/her ability and willingness to serve.  
Faculty: Blessed is the leader who knows where he/she is going, why he/she is going, and how to get there.  
Staff: Blessed is the leader who earnestly develops leaders while leading.  
Administrative Staff: Blessed is the leader who marches with the group and interprets correctly the signs on the pathway that lead to meaning and effectivity.  
Community: BLESSED IS THE LEADER WHOSE HEAD IS IN THE CLOUDS BUT WHOSE FEET IS ON THE GROUND.  
Church: Blessed is the leader who considers leadership as an opportunity for service to humanity and creation.

## **THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS**

## **HYMN OF DEDICATION OR SCHOOL HYMN**

## **PRAYER AND BENEDICTION**

Choral Response

## **POSTLUDE**

## **RECESSIONAL**

— Rev. Luna Dingayan

# LITURGY FOR THE INVESTITURE OF A NEW SCHOOL PRESIDENT I

## PRELUDE

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN** *All may be standing*

**CALL TO WORSHIP** *All may be standing*

Leader: Open your hearts, O people of God! Open your ears and listen to the Good News  
People: GLORY BE TO GOD THE LORD ETERNAL FOR GOD'S LOVE ENDURES FOREVER!  
Leader: God lead the peoples of the world with justice and righteousness.  
Men: God's kindness is great toward us; God forgives all our iniquities.  
Women: God redeems us from destruction, and showers us with tender mercies.  
All: GOD IS MERCIFUL TO US! LET US THEREFORE OFFER OURSELVES TO THE LORD AS LIVING  
SACRIFICES! DEDICATED TO GOD'S SERVICE AND OBEDIENT TO GOD'S WILL  
Leader: O worship the Lord with me, and let us exalt God's Name together!  
All: *to be sung*

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY! LORD GOD ALMIGHTY!  
ALL THY WORKS SHALL PRAISE THY NAME IN EARTH AND SKY AND SEA;  
HOLY, HOLY, HOLY! MERCIFUL AND MIGHTY!  
GOD IN THREE PERSONS, BLESSED TRINITY. AMEN.

**INVOCATION** *All may be standing*

Leader: Our help is in the Lord  
People: WHO MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH.  
Leader: The Lord is near to all who call upon Him,  
People: TO ALL WHO CALL UPON HIM IN TRUTH.  
All: COME AND BE WITH US NOW, O GOD. TEACH US TO BE YOUR CHILDREN. MAKE US OFFER  
OURSELVES TO YOU SO THAT WE MAY KNOW WHAT YOU WANT US TO BE AND WHAT YOU  
WANT US TO DO. MAKE US TO LEARN FROM YOU SO THAT WE MAY GROW IN OUR LOVE FOR  
YOU, AND BE EMPOWERED TO SERVE YOUR PEOPLE. PREPARE US NOW, THROUGH YOUR SPIRIT,  
TO LISTEN TO WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY TO AND TO WORSHIP YOU WITH JOY AND  
THANKSGIVING. IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, WE PRAY. AMEN.

## NATIONAL ANTHEM

## RECOGNITION AND WELCOMING OF GUESTS

## WORDS OF GREETINGS

## THE ANTHEM

**READING OF THE SCRIPTURES** *All may be standing*

Old Testament: Psalms 72:1-7  
New Testament: Mark 10:35-45

## PRAYER HYMN

## THE CALL AND THE RESPONSE

Reading of the Actions of the Board of Trustees -  
Introduction of the New President -  
Presentation of the New President -  
Turning Over the Key of Responsibility -

## THE INVESTITURE CEREMONY THE ADDRESS



Minister: One of the primary tasks of the Church is to educate people. Institutions of learning have been established by the Church in order to fulfill this task. For the administration of the work of this school and for the orderly conduct of its affairs, the Church has deemed it necessary to elect through the Board of Trustees certain individuals for the performance of special tasks and functions, one of which is that of a president. To that office, \_\_\_\_\_ has been elected. As we consecrate \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ office, let us seek God's blessings upon \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ task.

*The Covenant of Faith:*

Minister: Dearly beloved, you have been called to administer the life and work of . Do you accept the office to which you have been elected?

President-Elect: I DO.

Minister: Do you promise, the Lord Jesus Christ being your helper to faithfully fulfill your duties and responsibilities?

President-Elect: I DO.

Minister: (To the whole college community) Do you gladly receive \_\_\_\_\_ as your president for the ensuing term?

People: WE DO.

Minister: Will you pledge your eager support to the work of the (the school) under the leadership of your new president?

People: BY GOD'S GRACE, WE WILL.

Minister: We, now, through the use of symbols express the length and breadth and height and depth of the president's calling and task.

## THE SYMBOLS

*The Vestment:*

Presentor: The gown symbolizes God's indwelling presence - a companionship that empowers, sustains, and transforms. Where the presence of God is proclaimed and experienced there is change in the self, in the school, in the church, and in society as well.

*The Cap and Academic Collar.*

Presentor: These cap and academic collar symbolize wisdom and knowledge. The Book of Proverbs says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." (Prov. 1:7)

*The Mace:*

Presentor: The mace is a symbol of authority. It reminds us of what Jesus said to his disciples, "If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of the rest; and if one of you wants to be first, he must be the slave of all." (Mark 10:43).

*The Bible with the Newspaper:*

Presentor: The Scripture says, "Man cannot live by bread alone, but needs every word that God speaks" (Matt. 4:4). An administrator of a church-related institution must be guided by the Word of God, the Bible, and the word of people, the newspaper.

*The Torch*

Presentor: This torch symbolizes light. Jesus our Lord said, "You are light of the world... let your light shine before people, so that they will see the good things you do and praise your God in heaven" (Matt. 5:14-16).

*The Staff*

Presenter: This staff symbolizes the leading and guiding presence of God. The Psalmist says, "Eventhough I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4).

#### **THE DECLARATION OF INSTALLATION**

Minister: By virtue of the authority given to me, and in behalf of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, I now declare you duly installed as the new president of \_\_\_\_\_. May the blessings of the Holy God, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon you, and prosper you in your work. Amen.

#### **THE OATH OF OFFICE**

President-Elect: I, \_\_\_\_\_, having been elected President of \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby solemnly pledge that I will faithfully discharge to the best of my ability the duties and responsibilities of the office to which I am elected by the church through the Board of Trustees. I do promise to uphold the Constitution and By-Laws of \_\_\_\_\_ and to pursue the achievement of its mission objectives. I do swear that I will respectfully abide by the rules and regulations of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports and the Constitution and By-Laws of the Republic of the Philippines. So help me God.

*Congregational Response (Sung)*

President-elect kneeling, members of the family standing beside

#### **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

#### **HYMN OF COMMUNITY**

#### **A LITANY ON LEADERSHIP**

Students: Blessed is the leader who has not sought the high places, but who has been drafted into service because of his ability and willingness to serve.

Faculty: Blessed is the leader who knows where he is going, why he is going, and how to get there.

Staff: Blessed is the leader who develops leaders while leading.

Administration: Blessed is the leader who marches with the group and interprets correctly the signs on the pathway that leads to success.

Community: Blessed is the leader who has his head in the clouds but his feet on the ground.

Church: Blessed is the leader who considers leadership as an opportunity for service.

#### **THE INAUGURAL ADDRESS**

#### **HYMN OF DEDICATION OR THE SCHOOL'S HYMN**

#### **PRAYER AND BENEDICTION**

Choral Response:

#### **POSTLUDE**

#### **RECESSIONAL**

# LITURGY FOR THE COVENANT OF CANDIDATES FOR APPRENTICESHIP

This may be part of the Annual Conference Liturgy or a Local Congregational Service

## THE CALL

### SILENT PRAYERS

As the people enter, they are invited to meditate silently, preferably with the sound of an indigenous musical instrument

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: "Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his house and eat with him, and he will eat with me... If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says" (Rev. 3:20,92).

## THE ACT OF THANKSGIVING

### HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

*Those who are able in the congregation may stand*

### PRAYER (Minister)

O God, give us a pure heart that we may see You,  
a humble heart that we may hear You,  
a heart of love that we May serve You Amen,

## THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S LOVE

### SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Old Testament: Exodus 20:1-17  
Gloria Patri or other canticle ( *Congregation Standing* )  
New Testament: John 15.1-8

### ANTHEM OR CHORAL PROCLAMATION

*Those who are able in the congregation may remain standing*

### MEDITATION

*This may be on the meaning of God's covenant with the people*

## THE COVENANT

### PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES FOR APPRENTICESHIP

Presentor: Dear sisters and brothers, I now present to you our candidates for apprenticeship in the Christian ministry. *As their names are called, they will come forward and each briefly say something about their call to the ministry.*

### ADDRESS TO THE CANDIDATES

You have been recruited through your local church as a candidate/ candidates for the ministry. This presumes that you have received firstly, the call to be a disciple in Jesus Christ and now have the inner persuasion or experience of being summoned to take up the work of ministry. We commend you and the persons surrounding you who have been responsible for this call.

You are now to test further whether or not the call to fulltime ministry is real as you enter into the apprenticeship program of our church. We presume that the local church has done the required preliminary interviews and testing prior to your coming to us at this Conference time. Likewise, the Conference has thoroughly examined you as prescribed by the Office of the Clergy of our church.

You are now to embark in your preliminary preparation for the ministry that you have inherited from Israel as a chosen people of God and in a unique way from Jesus Christ who served as priest, prophet and pastor to his people. Hence, this period of apprenticeship is indeed a period of testing as to whether or not you are truly called to fulltime ministry.

You are to be assigned to a local church apprenticeship center at \_\_\_\_\_ in order to expose and strengthen you to your commitment and understanding of what the church's fulltime ministry is all about. You, together with your pastoral counselor and role model will embark on a period of exposure and experience in the various facets of the church's ministry. Through all these you are to assess yourself as you grow in your understanding of the pastoral calling and decided, God helping you, as to whether or not you will proceed to the ministerial training.

Therefore, let us make the covenant of God our own. Let us now, in sincere dependence on God's grace and the Spirit's leading, trust and yield ourselves to God in this testing time.

**COVENANT PRAYER** *Candidates who are able may kneel*

Minister: O God Most Holy, who has called us through Jesus Christ to offer our lives to the service of God's kingdom in and through the Church. We offer now to you these young persons who wish to offer their lives in fulltime service to you. We now commend to you this period of testing and examining that these persons are offering themselves to enter into. Help them in their search for meaning in life and in their continuing understanding of who they are and what you are calling them to be and to do. In Christ's name. Amen.

Candidates: I give you my life, my time, my talents; even my insecurities, questions, fears, as well as hope, joy and fulfillment. Help me to understanding myself even as I continue to understand you and your call for me. Take me and test me and show me the path that I should take. Amen.

Congregation/Community: O glorious and blessed God, you are our God and we are your people and we offer to you this moment of dedication of our young people. Be in the covenant that these our young people are making with you and your church. In Christ's name. Amen.

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

*Those who are able in the congregation may stand*

Minister: Lift up your hearts!

People: WE LIFT THEM UP TO THE LORD!

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord!

People: It is fitting, right, and our duty that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, Almighty and Everlasting God.

Choral Response:

All: (to be sung.) "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, LORD GOD ALMIGHTY"

**BENEDICTION**

*Those who are able in the congregation may stand*

Minister: May the love of God unite us,  
the joy of God inspire us, the peace of God enfold us,  
the courage of God sustain us, and may the blessings of God:  
the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer rest upon us evermore. Amen.

**POSTLUDE**

**RECESSIONAL**

## A COVENANT FOR APPRENTICESHIP

I pledge before God and the people to offer my life in full obedience to God's call to me to search myself and God's call to me, dedicating this year in earnest and dedicated apprenticeship towards a fuller understanding of the church's ministry and my place in it.

I shall gladly undertake whatever discipline and assignment necessary during this period of apprenticeship in the community of faith with an open heart and mind that I may truly understand myself, the church, and the wholeness of ministry.

I shall give my utmost to the development of my intellect, my affection, my spirituality and my understanding towards the deepening of my faith and relationships and the understanding of the church's ministry in its wholeness wherever and with who-ever I will be.

I shall accept any tasks and duties for church vocation given to me by the church through its jurisdictions while doing my apprenticeship and even after completion of the same.

I shall conduct myself in the most honorable of ways in all my relationships and activities open always to the guiding of the Holy Spirit, so help me, God.

Signed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ Province of \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Candidate

Witnesses:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

# LITURGY FOR COMMISSIONING OF INTERNS AND GRADUATES

## THE CALL

### SILENT MEDITATION

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has chosen me to bring good news to the poor,  
He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free the oppressed  
And announce that the time has come when the Lord will save his people."

— Luke 4:18-19

### PRELUDE

Lighting of Candles

Procession of Worship Leaders

### HYMN OF LAMENTATION

### CALL TO AWARENESS

Leader: "I have seen the affliction of my people,  
I have heard their cries.  
Therefore, I have come down to deliver them from their slave masters  
And bring them into a land flowing with milk and honey" (Exodus 3:7-8).

### THE RESPONSE

### READING OF THE SCRIPTURE LESSON

Isaiah 6:1-8

### RESPONDING TO THE CALL IN SONG *by the candidates*

### THE COMMISSIONING

### PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

The Field Education Director or Dean may present the candidates, after which each candidate may say a brief word on their calling.

### ADDRESS TO THE CANDIDATES

Minister: Beloved in Christ, we are indeed grateful that you have responded to the call of the Christian ministry. After several years of preparation in this institution of learning, you are now being commissioned to go and bear witness to the Gospel of Christ through an actual fulltime church assignment.

### THE VOWS OF COMMISSIONING

Minister: Listen once again to what Jesus said, "Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the Name of the God and Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. And remember I will be with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20). Do you take this as your commission, and your sole purpose for entering the Christian ministry?

Candidates: WE DO, GOD BEING OUR HELPER.

Minister: Every Scripture inspired of God is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be complete, perfectly equipped for every good work (II Timothy 3:16).

Will you diligently read and study the Holy Scriptures and faithfully share them with others?

Candidates: WE WILL, THE LORD BEING OUR GUIDE.

Minister: Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd is one who is willing to give his life for the sake of the flock" (John 10:11).

Will you strive earnestly to fulfill your duties as faithful servant of Christ: preaching the Word of God in sincerity; administering the sacraments with purity; seeing to it that proper discipline is maintained in the community of faith; and using all your talents and strengths to promote the work, welfare and unity of the church?

Candidates: WE WILL, THE LORD BEING OUR HELPER.

## THE SYMBOLS OF THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

### The Vestment:

Presenter: Receive these vestment, symbol of your being set apart for the Christian ministry and service.

### The Stole:

Presenter: Receive this stole, symbols of your being servants yoked in humility for the work of Christ.

### The Bible:

Presenter: Receive this Bible, the Word of God from which you shall preach and teach henceforth.

To God be the glory and honor and majesty, now and forevermore. Amen.

## HYMN OF DEDICATION

## PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

Candidates kneeling. Those who are able in the congregation may stand.

Minister: All glory, praise and thanksgiving be to you, O Loving God, for you have revealed your love for us in sending your beloved Son for our redemption, and have from the beginning chosen servants to proclaim the message of your love. We give you thanks for the devotion of these your servants whom we now in your name, set apart for the Christian ministry. Accept their love and devotion, dear God, and increase in them the gifts of your Holy Spirit that they may live the life of Christ. Give them understanding, compassion and patience. Guard them in body and soul. Be their strength and joy. Cheer them up with your abiding presence. And make them glad with the fruits of their ministry. We pray, dear God, that you will help us who join in this service of commissioning to encourage them in their ministry, and bear them up continually with prayer, and share in this gracious ministry with them as we all endeavor to build living faith in the lives of all who come within our Christian ministry, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## THE CHARGE TO THE CANDIDATES *Congregation and candidates standing*

Minister: We beseech you to walk worthily of the calling to which you are called, with all lowliness and meekness, giving diligence to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. We exhort you to encourage the faint-hearted, support the weak, be patient toward all things, hold fast that which is good, refrain from every form of evil. Give heed to reading; study to show yourself a workperson approved by God, rightly handling the Word of Life. Fight the good fight of faith. Follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. If you put all these in mind and in heart, you shall be a good minister of Jesus Christ.

## THE BLESSINGS

Congregation and candidates may remain standing

Minister: May the Lord bless you and keep you,  
the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you;  
May the Lord lift up His countenance upon you; and give you peace. Amen.

## RECESSIONAL HYMN

# THE ORDER OF THE DEDICATION OF PROPERTIES

## ORDER OF THE DEDICATION OF A NEW CHURCH I

### OUTDOOR SERVICE

#### PRESENTATION OF KEY

The key/s to the new church are presented to the Minister and chair-person of the Church Council by the members of the Building Committee. The Minister unlocks the door/s.

#### OPENING OF THE DOOR

#### PRESENTATION OF CHRISTIAN FLAG OR SYMBOL OF THE CHURCH *(if any)*

#### PROCESSIONAL

### INDOOR SERVICE

#### OPENING PRAYER

#### HYMN OF PRAISE

#### SCRIPTURE READING

#### PRESENTATION OF BUILDING

#### ACCEPTANCE AND DEDICATION

#### LITANY OF DEDICATION

Minister: Holy God, having by grace and through the generosity of our benefactors and the consecrated efforts of members and friends of this church brought to consummation the building of this House wherein the Gospel is to be preached, God's ordinances administered, the unity of the church magnified, and wherein prayer and praise are to be offered to God, we are assembled to dedicate this house to its sacred use.

People: TO THE WORSHIP OF GOD THE CREATOR AND OF THE SON JESUS CHRIST AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, WE REVERENTLY DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Minister or Church Council Chair: To the enrichment of life by the orderly and prayerful administration of the Church's interests in unity and love —

People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Minister or Minister of Christian Education: To the nurture and training of children, young people, men, and women in the ideals, purposes, and activities of God's realm among people, that they may attain the fullness of life in Christ —

People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Minister or a Woman Leader: To the strengthening of Christian womanhood in cooperative worship, enlightenment, and missionary service in the spirit of world friendship —

People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Minister or an Elder: To the fullness of Christian joy and praise, to the deepening of faith, hope, and love through the ministry of melody, harmony, and noble Christian sentiment —

People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Minister: To the preaching of the glad tidings of Jesus the Christ, who has committed to our hands this Sacred trust, to the exaltation of his holy name on earth, and to the proclamation of his boundless love among all peoples —



People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Minister: To the observance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the symbolic rite of Christian baptism, to the leading of persons to choose Christ, confess his holy name, and live worthily in his service —

People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Minister: To the inspiration of human life, to the comfort of sorrowing hearts, to the strengthening of the heavy-laden, to the bringing of hope to the discouraged, to the fellowship of Christian men and women in service, prayer, and praise —

People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Minister or Mission Chairperson: To the advancement of unity among God's people, to the promotion of world peace, to the extension of missionary endeavor, to the uplift of humanity through education, social action and reform, and the practice of Christian unity —

People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

A Farmer or Labor Church Member: To the proclamation of the message of the glory of the earth, the dignity of the task of the tillers of the soil and other workers with their hands and to the edification of the church and ministry —

People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Minister: To the glory of God and in loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_ *(if this is also a memorial)*

People: WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH.

Unison: WE WHO ARE GATHERED HERE TOGETHER, CONSCIOUS OF THE GIFTS OF donors/benefactors AND OTHER FRIENDS WHO HAVE MADE THIS BUILDING POSSIBLE, DO EXPRESS OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE TO GOD AND TO THEM FOR THE JOY AND INSPIRATION OF THIS ACHIEVEMENT. WE COVENANT, IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD WITH ONE ANOTHER, TO WALK HUMBLY TOGETHER IN SERVICE AND IN LOVE. WE NOW DEDICATE OURSELVES ANEW TO THE FOLLOWING OF CHRIST AND TO THE EXTENSION OF GODLY KINGDOM TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH. TO THIS END, IN THE NAME OF THE SOVEREIGN GOD AND OF THE SON, JESUS CHRIST AND OF HOLY SPIRIT, WE DEDICATE THIS CHURCH. AMEN.

#### **THE DOXOLOGY or A HYMN OF ACCLAMATION**

#### **WORDS OF INVITATION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER *(if any)***

#### **COMMUNION HYMN**

#### **MEDITATION**

#### **THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

#### **DEDICATORY OFFERING**

#### **HYMN**

#### **GREETINGS *from Guests and Visitors***

#### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

#### **BENEDICTION**

*(Followed by dinner or reception if any)*

— James William Sells

## ORDER OF THE DEDICATION OF A NEW CHURCH II

This service of Dedication of the new church building may begin outside the front entrance with the people surrounding the leaders, facing the church. During the singing of the hymn of praise, the congregation will proceed into the sanctuary and continue singing.

### PREPARATION

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: Except the Lord build the house, the work of the builders is useless (Psalm 127:1).

People: LET THE BEAUTY OF THE LORD OUR GOD BE UPON US; AND ESTABLISH 'THE WORK OF OUR HANDS UPON US; YES, THE WORK OF OUR HANDS ESTABLISH IT! (Psalm 90:17)

#### ANTHEM OF THANKSGIVING OR ADORATION *(Choir/Singers)*

#### INVOCATION

O God, eternal and ever blessed, who delights in the assembling of your people in the sanctuary; receive us graciously as we come into Your house; and grant we pray You, that peace and harmony may be found within its walls; that the glory of God may be its light; and that we may be satisfied with the goodness of Your house, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### HYMN OF PRAISE TO GOD

#### THE PSALTER

*Psalm 122:1-9*

Leader: I was glad when they said to me "Let us go to the house of the Lord."

People: AND NOW WE ARE HERE, STANDING INSIDE THE GATES OF THIS CHURCH, (Name of Church).

Leader: In this church, a community will be restored in beautiful order and harmony.

People: THIS IS WHERE THE PEOPLE — THE PEOPLE OF GOD — COME TO GIVE TI-LANKS TO THE LORD.

All: And so, let us all rejoice for this house of the Creator, our God.

#### DOXOLOGY *[Asian or Philippine tune may be used]*

*Those who are able may stand.*

Following an anthem, the psalter reading and the Doxology, the pastor and the people, if it is desired, shall affirm their faith by saying the Apostles Creed or the UCCP Statement of Faith.

#### APOSTLES' CREED OR UCCP STATEMENT OF FAITH *For those who are able, remain standing*

#### SCRIPTURE LESSON

The Scripture Lesson shall be read, using one of these passages, or other. Chronicle 29:10-13; Romans 16:25-27

#### A HYMN ON THE CHURCH'S FOUNDATION

While this hymn is sung in preparation for the act of Dedication, the blue print or a miniature replica of the church building will be posted where everyone can see it. Or it can be a model or in pieces put together by representatives of the congregation: a child, youth, woman, man. This act depicts the stages of putting a church building together which is possible only through the guidance of God in the Holy Spirit.

#### THE ACT OF DEDICATION

If the previous liturgical act was done inside the new sanctuary, this act of dedication, if desired and is possible may be done in a place where every-one will have a good view of the whole sanctuary.

Minister: Having been prospered by the good hand of our Creator God, through many a generous help, and enabled by God's grace and power to complete this house of worship to be used for the glory of God's name, we will now in God's presence dedicate this building.

To the glory of God, our Creator, from whom comes every good and perfect gift — we dedicate this house.

To the honor of Jesus Christ, God's Son and Saviour; and to the praise of the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, Source of light and life, to You we dedicate this house.

Congregation: BLESSING, HONOR, GLORY AND POWER BE TO YOU, O GOD.

Church Officers: We, the officers of this congregation, relying upon God for wisdom and strength, do hereby covenant that we will earnestly promote the peace and unity of the church to the end that this building of God may serve its purpose completely: for the worship of God in prayer, for the ministry of the Word, and for the celebration of the holy sacraments.

Congregation: BLESSING, HONOR, GLORY AND POWER BE UNTO YOU, O GOD.

Minister and the Elderly: In grateful remembrance of all who have faithfully worshipped and served in this church, and with hearts tender for those who have died and are now with the Church triumphant,

Congregation: WE DEDICATE. THIS BUILDING TO THE GOD OF THE LIVING AND THE DEAD!

Minister and the Bereaved or Suffering: For the comfort of the sorrowing; For the strength to those who are tempted; For the guidance and understanding of those who seek the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Congregation: WE DEDICATE THE BUILDING TO OUR COMPASSION-ATE GOD!

Minister and all Parents: For the sanctification of family life; For the training of the young in faith, in knowledge and godly conduct;

For the enabling of the whole of life in work, laughter and fellowship; For the equipping God's people for ministry in home, business and community

Congregation: WE DEDICATE THIS BUILDING TO THE GOD OUR FATHER AND OUR MOTHER!

Ministers and Church Leaders: For the continuing task of the church of Christ through education, evangelism and mission; For the promotion of national righteousness and honor; For the advancement of Christian unity and international goodwill

Congregation: WE DEDICATE THIS BUILDING TO THE GOD OF ALL NATIONS AND ALL PEOPLES!

Minister: As a free-will offering of thanksgiving and praise, as a tribute of gratitude, from those who have experienced the riches of God's grace.

Congregation: WE, THE MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION, CON-SECRATING OURSELVES ANEW, DEDICATE THIS ENTIRE HOUSE OF THE LORD FOR THE WORSHIP OF THE HOLY GOD, AND TO THE SERVICE OF OUR HUMAN BEINGS, IN THE SPIRIT AND NAME OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR. AMEN.

#### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION** *(Unison)*

O Holy and Everlasting God, accept the offering of this house which Your people have built to the glory of Your Holy Name. Let Your ministers be clothed with righteousness, and let Your people sing for joy. Put Your name in this place. Let Your eyes be opened toward it and listen to the supplications of Your people when they pray in this place, and when you hear, please forgive. And now "establish thou the work of our hands upon us. Yes, the work of our hands, establish it." And to Your blessed Name, O God, whose we are and whom we serve, be honor and glory forever, through Jesus Christ, the Lord of the Church. Amen.

Minister: As a testimony of our sincerity, let us together offer that prayer which our Lord taught the disciples to pray: The Lord's Prayer.

#### **HYMN OF CONSECRATION OR THANKSGIVING**

#### **BENEDICTION**

Congregational Response: AMEN.

— *Digna Campaño/Al Fuertes*

# LITURGY FOR THE DEDICATION OF MEMORIALS IN THE CHURCH

## ORGAN PRELUDE

## CALL TO WORSHIP *(if a separate worship service)*

## HYMN OF INVOCATION OR SUPPLICATION FOR THE OCCASION

## SCRIPTURE READING

## PRAYER

## STATEMENT OF MEMORIAL AND HONOR BEQUESTS

## RESPONSIVE LITANY OF DEDICATION

- Minister: To the cultivation of our deeper selves in the practice of the faith symbolized in these windows—
- People: WE DEDICATE THESE WINDOWS.
- Minister: To the service of him who endured the Cross, despised its shame, and made it the symbol of victory and life —
- People: WE DEDICATE THIS ALTAR CROSS.
- Minister: To the memory of him who, through his broken body and shed blood, purchased the remission of our sins, and instituted the Last Supper as an eternal memorial and prophecy —
- People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION TABLE.
- Minister: To the proclamation of the eternal gospel of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour, and to the teaching of God's way of love and life —
- People: WE DEDICATE THIS PULPIT.
- Minister: To the correction of the erring, to the redemption of all who sin, to provide discipline and instruction, to the perfection of all in God, to the exaltation of Christ, to the establishment of the Realm of God, and to the glory of God, the Creator —
- People: WE DEDICATE THIS BIBLE.
- Minister: To the comfort of all who worship herein, to the enrichment of our worship experience, to the spirit of kinship, fellowship, and good will, and to the enlargement of our service in behalf of all humankind through unity, love, and Christian companionship —
- People: WE DEDICATE THESE PEWS.
- Unison: O HOLY AND EVERLASTING GOD, WHO INHABITS ETERNITY AND DWELLS NOT IN TEMPLES MADE WITH HUMAN HANDS, YET WHO MANIFESTS YOURSELF TO YOUR PEOPLE IN THE SANCTUARY, BLESS THESE MEMORIALS AND BEQUESTS WE HAVE THIS DAY DEDICATED, AND ACCEPT FROM US THE REDEDICATION OF OUR OWN INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE LIVES, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

## THE DOXOLOGY

## DEDICATORY OFFERING

## MESSAGE OF INTERPRETATION

## HYMN

## BENEDICTON

— James William Sells

## LITURGY FOR THE DEDICATION OF CHURCH FURNISHING AND OTHER PROPERTY

In accordance with a venerable tradition, church furnishing and ornaments are consecrated by being put to the use for which they were intended. If a rite of dedication is desired, one of the following forms may be used after the sermon.

It is appropriate, when the object to be dedicated is fixed, that there be a procession to that place. If the procession is to a distant place, an anthem or hymn may be sung. When the object is portable, it should be brought to the Chancel area and presented to the celebrant.

### A. COMMUNION TABLE

Presentation: *by Pastor, Trustee or Donor saying:*

This Communion Table is a gift from (name of donor) and is presented to the Church as a token of their love and loyalty to Christ and their Church. In acknowledgment of the rich blessing of God and the Christian fellowship enjoyed in this church they are joy-fully giving this gift.

Acceptance: *by Pastor, Elder or Deacon, or a Church representative*

On behalf of our Church, I accept this gift with sincere gratitude. As a congregation we want to assure the donors that we appreciate their thoughtfulness in providing the Church with an appropriate gift which will be used in the ministry of the Church to the glory of God.

### ACT OF DEDICATION

Minister: To observe "the Lord's death till He come,"

People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION TABLE

Minister: In commemoration of the sacrificial Life and sacrificial Death of our Saviour,

People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION TABLE.

Minister: In memory of the great company of Christians who through all the ages have been partakers of the blessings bestowed upon them through the observance of the Lord's Supper,

People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION TABLE.

Minister: In memory of our loved ones who have shared in this Sup-per in the past and are now gone before us,

People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION TABLE

Minister: In grateful recognition of the abiding presence of God and God's nearness as we partake of the consecrated elements on this table.

People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION TABLE.

### DEDICATION HYMN

### DEDICATORY PRAYER

### B. A BAPTISMAL FONT

### HYMN

### SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Luke 3:1-22; Matthew 28:16-20

### DEDICATION OF BAPTISTRY

*Address to the People*

For as much as people have been moved and inspired to dedicate instruments and objects to be used for God's honor and glory, separating them from all unhallowed and common uses, let us set apart this baptistry in a solemn manner, for the baptism of those who humbly seek to obey this command of the Lord.

*Sentences of Dedication*

Minister: Eternal God, Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer;

People: TO YOU WE DEDICATE THIS BAPTISTRY.

Minister: For the baptism of those who have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior,

People: WE DEDICATE THIS BAPTISTRY.

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**C. A BULLETIN BOARD**

**INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

This Bulletin Board is a gift from (name of donor) and is presented to the church as a token of their love and loyalty to Christ and their Church. In acknowledgment of the rich blessings of God and the Christian fellowship enjoyed in this Church they are joyfully giving this gift.

Minister: "O send out Thy light and Thy truth: let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." (Ps. 43:3)

The message of the Gospel is "good news." "For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." (Acts 13:47)

The Church from its beginning has used many instruments to make known the Gospel light. It has used the pulpit, music and song, the printed page and printed announcements. This Bulletin Board which is now to be dedicated is another instrument by which the "good news" may be made known:

Let us pray — O Lord, bless this instrument for making known Thy Word. May the words written herein lead people to Thee and to Thy house. Amen.

**ACT OF DEDICATION**

Minister: To the propagation of Truth in this community,

People: WE DEDICATE THIS BULLETIN BOARD

Minister: To promote the efficiency of our Church:

People: WE DEDICATE THIS BULLETIN BOARD

Minister: That all who pass by may receive an invitation to worship with us,

People: WE DEDICATE THIS BULLETIN BOARD

Minister: To God and for his glory

People: WE DEDICATE THIS BUILDING.

**PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

**D. CHURCH HYMALS**

**SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE READING**

I Chronicle 9:33, 15:16; Psalm 8:1, 9-11; I Corinthians 14:15

## **APPROPRIATE HYMN**

### **THE ACT OF DEDICATION**

Minister: Unto Thee, O God, for the purpose of worship,  
People: WE DEDICATE THIS HYMNALS.  
Minister: For the instruction of choir and congregation,  
People: WE DEDICATE THIS HYMNALS.  
Minister: For the promotion and cultivation of a true appreciation of a church music and the great hymns of the Christian Faith,  
People: WE DEDICATE MIS HYMNALS.  
Minister: For the ministry of song to comfort the sorrowing and to inspire the faithhearted,  
People: WE DEDICATE THIS HYMNALS.  
Minister: For the ministry of song in the happy hours of life, and in the gladness of the great days of the Church year:  
People: WE DEDICATE THIS HYMNALS.  
Minister: As a message of the Gospel of peace and good tidings to all People,  
People: WE DEDICATE THIS HYMNALS.  
Minister: To the glory of God, the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. People: WE DEDICATE THIS HYMNALS.

### **DEDICATORY PRAYER**

O God, we humbly beseech Thee to accept these hymnals as a gift to Thee, to be used in our worship of Thee. By their aid, may the ministry of song be an inspiration and comfort to those who worship in this Thy House. May they be the instrument through which the praises of our hearts shall be offered unto Thee. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **E. A COMMUNION SET**

### **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

#### **APPROPRIATE HYMN**

#### **ACT OF DEDICATION**

Minister: To the glory of God who revealed the love to humankind through the life, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION SET  
Minister: To the of our Lord, Jesus Christ, who instituted the ordinance of the Last Supper as a memorial of Jesus Christ's death for us,  
People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION SET  
Minister: To the glory of the blessed Holy Spirit, under whose direction we are moved led to consecrate our lives anew at the observance of the Communion Service  
People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION SET  
Minister: To all who need comfort and peace; to those who are ill and need the assurance that the everlasting arm of God are ever beneath them.  
People: WE DEDICATE THIS COMMUNION SET

### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Almighty Lord Jesus whose sacrifice of yourself on the Cross we commemorate before Thee in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, accept this Communion Set, that those who will use it may receive by faith the blessings promised to the faithful. Sanctify this Communion Set to this sacred service and may it help Thy Children in the way of love and service. In the name. of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

— *Digna Campañano/AI Fuertes*

## **LITURGY FOR THE DEDICATION OF A PARSONAGE OR PASTORAL HOUSE**

Local Churches are encouraged to build parsonages for their pastors and church workers. As these buildings are completed, they are to be duly dedicated in the presence of the congregation. An appropriate service shall be prepared by the Pastor. The following order may be followed.

### **A HYMN OF PRAISE OR THANKSGIVING TO GOD**

### **DECLARATION OF THE PURPOSE OF THE GATHERING**

The officiating Pastor, with the congregation assembled in the living room of the Parsonage, will say:

Peace be to this house. Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. This house shall be the home of our Pastor (Church Worker). It will be a place where the Pastor can be alone with his/her family with as much privacy as will help the pastor develop normal life in his/her own home. This will be the center of family solidarity and spirituality in the parish. Thus it is important that we gather here to invoke the divine blessing upon the parsonage that it may be a blessing to the church and the community.

### **INVOCATION**

### **DOXOLOGY**

*The officiating Pastor will say,*

"Who presents this Parsonage to be dedicated?"

The trustees, or Building Committee, will stand before the congregation, and one of them will say,

"We present to you this building, to be dedicated to the service of the Holy God through its use as a dwelling place for the Pastor of our Church and the family. Herewith we present to you the key (a member of the trustees of the building committee offers the key to the pastor who shall take it) which locks and unlocks the doors of this house. With it we pledge our willingness to keep this house for its intended use and in good repair."

### **CHARGE TO THE TRUSTEES OR BUILDING COMMITTEE**

The pastor will address the Trustees or Building Committee saying,

"Members of the Board of Trustees or Building Committee, in presenting this key you have signified your willingness to have this Parsonage dedicated. By the generous gifts which have made this possible, you have here given recognition to the noble place of the ministry and the importance of making provision for the temporal needs of those who administer its sacred offices.

You who have been chosen to serve as Trustees (Building Committee) are required to act in behalf of the church in exercising careful oversight of this property. It is important that it shall be kept in good repair so that its silent influence in the community may contribute to the glory of God.

Therefore, beloved friends, in the name of God our Parent, Jesus Christ our Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit our Sustainer, I charge you to assume faithfully the duties incumbent upon you as Trustees (Building Committee) of this parsonage."

The Pastor shall address the Congregation saying,

"With the giving of the gifts that made this Parsonage possible, you are now to present yourselves as stewards of this building, doing all you can to make it accomplish the purpose for which we now dedicate it, namely, to shelter the family that has a most peculiar relationship to this church and community.

May it stand for spiritual enrichment of all who shall step across its threshold. May it fulfill a vital role in creating good fellowship among the members of the parish. May it help to enhance the ability and faithfulness of those who reside here that there may be wise conduct of the affairs of this congregation."



## THE ACT OF DEDICATION

The pastor and the family will offer the following symbols:

Bible — for Spirituality  
Basket of Fruit — for Hospitality  
Handkerchief or Cloth — for Friendship  
Flowers — for Beauty

For the above purposes, hospitality, spirituality, friendship and beauty, as symbolized by these things, I dedicate this parsonage of the (*name of the local church*) local church of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, in the name of God (the Father, the Son and) our Creator, Jesus Christ our Redeemer and the Holy Spirit our Sustainer. Amen.

## GLORIA PATRI

## CLOSING PRAYER AND BENEDICTION

— *Digna Campaño/Al Fuertes*

## LITURGY FOR THE BLESSING OF A NEW HOUSE I

### WORDS OF PREPARATION

#### SALUTATION *all to each other*

May the peace and joy of God be with you and remain with you.

#### CALL TO CELEBRATION

Except the Lord build the house,  
They labor in vain that built it. (Psalm 127:1)

... Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us;  
yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it. (Psalm 90:17)

#### HYMN OF PRAISE TO GOD by all

#### INVOCATION

O loving and merciful God, you have promised to be with your children when they act in your Name. Be with us now, and of your goodness, bless what we shall bless to the glory of your Name and the benefit of your people. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALL: AMEN.

#### ACT OF DEDICATION

Pastor: Having been blessed by God through the generous hands of \_\_\_\_\_ and enabled by God's grace and power to build these homes/this house for the shelter and welfare of those who shall dwell within it/them, we dedicate this house in the spirit of Christian love.

Response: WE DEDICATE THESE HOMES FOR GOD'S BLESSING.

Pastor: Charity, love, trust and faith are the corner posts, faith in God the center post which will make of these a home, a home with a soul. Will you therefore who will live in these homes trust our God?

Response: WE WILL TRUST GOD SINCERELY AND DWELL HERE IN SAFETY AND SECURITY

Pastor: We dedicate and bless these homes with deep appreciation for its donors and its builders and gratitude to God.

May their doors stand for security but which open at a touch, their windows look out with kindness toward other homes; their furnishings bear witness that the work of others and our own hands add to our comfort; the tables remind us that God is the Giver of our food; both temporal and spiritual, and that the Holy Book gives us fellowship with great souls and guidance for our living.

We dedicate these homes for work and leisure; to thought and laughter, to quietness and growth. We dedicate these homes to joy and comradeship, to courage and patience, to courtesy and mutual understanding and to hospitality, to those who would need a home and a shelter in fellowship with God. So help us, God.

All: AMEN.

#### **THE LIGHTING OF CANDLES AND INCENSE** *light a candle and incense in each home/room*

We light this candle representing Jesus Christ, the light of the world. May God's presence in our midst continue to light our way and our thoughts.

We light this candle of peace that in these houses may reign the peace of God which passes all understanding.

We light this candle of Joy, that in these houses may reign always the joy of company, of work well done, and quiet solitude.

We light this candle of Love, that in these houses may reign forever a Love that will not let us go, grounded in the service of Christ Jesus our Lord.

We light this incense to praise and glorify God, the God of these homes to Whom prayers will ascend endlessly and to drive away the powers of evil and darkness, in the name of Jesus Christ, our only Lord. Amen.

All: AMEN.

#### **BLESSING OF FOOD AND OF THE PEOPLE**

Peace be to these houses and to all who dwell in them now and in the future. Peace be to those who enter and to those who go out therefrom. Peace be to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. And may this peace be from God, the Creator, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

All: AMEN.

Bless now the Table that you have spread for us from your bounty and grant that as we partake of these blessings we shall be bound one to another even closer than ever, for we feast in the presence of Your Son, Jesus Christ, the Lord of all our lives.

All: AMEN.

## **LITURGY FOR THE BLESSING AND DEDICATION OF A NEW HOME II**

### **PREPARATION**

Word of explanation about the house.

### **SALUTATION**

Pastor: May the peace and joy of God be with you and remain with you.

People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

### **WORDS OF WELCOME**

A Parent: Friends and loved ones, I bid you all welcome to our home. May you find joy and comfort here. We are grateful for your presence and participation as we celebrate the completion of our new home and as we offer it to God's use and glory.

### **CALL TO CELEBRATION**

Liturgist: "Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." (Psalm 127:1)

Members of the Family: Let the beauty of our Lord our God be upon us; yes, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes the work of our hands establish it.

Unison: GOD IS HERE — GOD IS NOW!  
IT IS TIME FOR CELEBRATING!  
IT IS TIME FOR EXALTATION?  
LET US PRAISE GOD! LET US EXALT GOD'S NAME TOGETHER!

### **HYMN OF PRAISE TO GOD**

#### **PRAYER OF BLESSING FOR THE OCCASION** *Unison*

O GOD, CREATOR, REDEEMER AND SUSTAINER; GIVER OF ALL THAT WE OWN AND ENJOY; WE GIVE YOU PRAISE THAT YOU HAVE SO BLESSED THE (NAME OF HOUSEHOLD) FAMILY WITH A NEW HOME, AND SO, WITH THEM, OUR HEARTS OVERFLOW WITH THANKS-GIVING. BE WITH US HERE AND BE WITH US NOW AS WE DEDICATE ANEW OUR LIVES AND THIS NEW HOME TO YOUR GLORY AND TO SERVICE OF OTHERS. THROUGH JESUS CHRIST FROM WHOM ALL THINGS FLOW AND THROUGH WHOM ALL THINGS ARE SANCTIFIED. AMEN.

#### **PRESENTATION OF THE HOUSE FOR BLESSING AND DEDICATION**

The Builders: It has so pleased God and (name of household) to honor and challenge us with the responsibility of planning and constructing this unique house.

We offer our thanks to God for this honor and challenge and now we present to (name of household) the work of our minds and hands, and we pray that all that we have done here shall receive the approval and blessing of God and withstand the tests of time. We acknowledge with gratitude this new home.

The Family: May we now present this house to be blessed and dedicated to the glory of God and to the service of humankind and for a home where love, peace, understanding and joy shall abound.

#### **ACT OF DEDICATION AND BLESSING**

Pastor: Having prospered by the good hand of our God, and enabled by God's grace and power to build this house for our Lord's glory and the service of our fellow brethren, we will now stand in God's holy presence and dedicate this house in the spirit of Christian love.

People: WE DEDICATE THIS HOME UNTO THE LORD.

Pastor: Charity, love, trust and faith are the corner posts, faith in God the center post which will make of this your home, a home with a soul. Will you in this home trust (him?) our God.

Family Members: We will trust and follow our God.

Pastor: We dedicate and bless this house with appreciation for its builders and gratitude for God's leading which has brought this family here to make a home.

Parents: May its doors stand for security but open at a touch, its windows look out with kindness towards other homes; its furnishings bear witness that the work of others and our own hands add to our comfort; its table remind us that God is the giver of our food, both temporal and spiritual, and that the Holy Book gives us fellowship with great souls and guidance for our family living.

Children: We dedicate this home to work and leisure; to thought and laughter, to quietness and growth. We dedicate it to joy and comradeship, to courage and patience, to courtesy and mutual understanding, to loyalty and high fellowship.

Family members: We dedicate our home in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

Pastor: Put on then as God's chosen ones, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness and patience, forbearing one another, forgiving each other, as the Lord has forgiven you, so you must also forgive. And above all these put on love which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, that they may be serene and cheerful. Let the Word of Christ dwell in your hearts richly, as you teach and as you sing hymns with thankfulness to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.

### THE LIGHTING OF CANDLES/INCENSE

A Christ Candle may be placed at the receiving room — and other little candles in each of the other rooms, may be of different colors. After the lighting of each candle, the congregation may give a shower of rice and floral petals symbols of prosperity, beauty and joy.

We light this candle, representing Jesus Christ, the Light of the world. May God's presence in our midst continue to light our way and our thoughts.

We light this candle of Peace, that in this house may reign the peace of God which passes all understanding,

We light this candle of Joy, that in this house may reign always the joy of work well done,

We light this candle of Love, that in this house may reign forever a Love that will not let us go, grounded in the service of Christ Jesus our Lord.

We light these incense (7) to praise God and drive away the powers of evil and darkness, in the name of Jesus Christ.

*The people can move from mom to room as this is done.*

Pastor: As symbolized by the candles and incense that are now burning brightly, I dedicate and bless this house in the name of our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer. Amen.

Response: Sung

PRAISE THE LORD, PRAISE THE LORD!  
LET THE EARTH HEAR HIS VOICE  
PRAISE THE LORD, PRAISE THE LORD!  
LET THE PEOPLE REJOICE. O COME TO OUR CREATOR,  
THROUGH JESUS THE SON AND GIVE GOD THE GLORY  
GREAT THINGS HE HAS DONE! AMEN.

### HYMN OF BLESSING

#### CLOSING AND DEDICATORY PRAYER

O Living God, we dedicate this home and this family to You and Your service. Make this be a truly Christian household. For its member, may it be a place of happiness and health, a haven of peace and joy; a center of life that will develop beautiful things of heart and mind that will lead the soul to wider vision and higher aims. Give the members love for each other and for their neighbors near and far. And our God, bestow on them patience, strength and courage to live in such harmony with one another and in accord with Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### BLESSING AND RESPONSE

— *Digna Campaño/Al Fuertes*

# THE CELEBRATION OF THANKSGIVING (DEDICATION OF A FISH POND)

## CELEBRATION

*is when a family can reach beyond its own needs and thus embrace  
the needs of the larger human community*

*we cannot be satisfied merely to gratify our own nuclear needs*

*we can see ourselves as an extended family, extending  
our concerns to all of our relatives*

*indeed, one of our needs IS to embrace  
the struggle of the whole human family.*

*a family without an extended vision is  
a family living in poverty...  
a poverty of life style,  
of imagination,  
of self-image.*

— William K. McElvaney

## SONGS FOR GATHERING

### INVITATION AND CALL TO CELEBRATION

Acknowledgment of the Community  
Community Response:

We Are Family

### PSALTER READING

Psalm 96

### HYMN OF PRAISE AND ADORATION

### THE REASON FOR OUR GATHERING

Community Response: *(singing, if possible)*  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest  
Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest

### READING OF SCRIPTURES

Genesis 2:4b-15; Psalm 24

### SONG OF PROCLAMATION

Workers in the Pond

### BRIEF MESSAGE OR WORD ON THE PLACE

### THANKSGIVING AND DEDICATION OF LIFE AND LABOR

*(words/actions/songs/prayers)*

### SONG OF DEDICATION OR BLESSING

### BLESSING AND ASCRIPTION OF GLORY

Community Response: Amen or chorus of Praise

— Adapted from BOOK OF COMMON WORSHIP

# THE ORDER OF THE LORD'S DAY SERVICE FOR CHURCH YEAR CELEBRATIONS

## THE ORDER OF THE LORD'S DAY SERVICE FOR CHRISTMASTIDE IV

### THE COMMUNITY PRAISES GOD

#### PRELUDE

*(In Silent Meditation)*

Loving God, I trust the faithfulness displayed of old;  
I trust the love that never can grow cold; I trust in you.  
Now take this heart that I would give, forever to be all your own.  
I to myself no more would live; Come, Lord, for you alone are my God!

#### LIGHTING OF THE ALTAR CANDLES

#### INTROIT

#### CALL TO WORSHIP

Liturgist: Open your hearts, people of God. Open your ears and hear good news!

People: JOY SHALL COME EVEN TO THE WILDERNESS, AND ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE WORLD SHALL  
KNOW GREAT GLADNESS.

All: FOR GOD ALMIGHTY COMES AND REIGNS! GOD REIGNS IN LOVE AND WE FIND PEACE IN GOD'S  
REIGN!

Liturgist: When the song of the angels is stilled, when the star in the sky is gone,

People: WHEN THE KINGS AND THE SHEPHERDS HAVE FOUND THEIR WAY HOME,

All: THE WORK OF CHRISTMAS IS BEGUN!

Liturgist: For the kingdoms of the world should become the kingdom of our Lord., and the Lord shall reign  
forever and ever!

All *(singing)*:

REJOICE, THE LORD IS GOD! YOUR LORD AND GOD ADORE,  
REJOICE, GIVE THANKS AND SING AND TRIUMPH EVERMORE!  
LIFT UP YOUR HEART, LIFT UP YOUR VOICE  
REJOICE AGAIN I SAY, REJOICE!

#### INVOCATION

Liturgist: God bless us!

People: GOD BE PRESENT WITH US!

Liturgist: Let us pray to the Lord our God.

People: AND LISTEN TO GOD'S WILL FOR US!

All: CREATOR GOD, WE COME TO YOU TRUSTING IN YOUR FAITHFULNESS, KINDNESS AND MERCY. IN  
OUR WORSHIP TODAY, LEAD US TO LOVE YOU WITH ALL OUR HEART, MIND, SOUL AND  
STRENGTH; AND TO LOVE OTHERS AS WE LOVE OURSELVES. THROUGH YOUR HOLY SPIRIT,

INSPIRE US TO GLORIFY AND THANK YOU FOR THE WORLD YOU MADE AND FOR YOUR PRESENCE WITH EACH ONE OF US AND IN OUR LIFE TOGETHER. GOD OUR CREATOR, WE PRAISE YOU. JESUS CHRIST, OUR SAVIOR, WE OFFER OURSELVES TO YOU. HOLY SPIRIT, OUR SUSTAINER AND GUIDE, UNITE US IN PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING! AMEN.

### **THE COMMUNITY CONFESSES BEFORE GOD**

#### **CALL TO CONFESSION**

Liturgist: What mercies of God have we failed to acknowledge, and what good news have we neglected to share? We sin not only in the evil we do, but also in the good we neglect.

People: LET US SEEK GOD'S FORGIVENESS, THAT WE MAY KNOW THE GRACE THAT MAKES FOR RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH ONE ANOTHER AND WITH GOD.

#### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

Liturgist: Let us confess our sins to the God of mercy and love.

All: O GOD, OUR HOST AND OUR DWELLING PLACE, FORGIVE THE WAYS WE HAVE IGNORED YOU AND TURNED AWAY FROM YOUR INVITATION. WE HAVE MADE EXCUSES WHEN YOU CALLED US AND FAILED TO EXTEND YOUR WELCOME TO THE POOR AND DISPOSSESSED. WE HAVE SPENT OUR STRENGTH FOR NOTHING AND VANITY. WE HAVE OBEYED ONLY WHEN IT IS CONVENIENT TO DO SO. OUR DOUBTS AND FEARS MIRE US IN QUESTIONS WITHOUT PRAISE. FORGIVE US, O GOD, AND GRANT LIGHT FOR OUR PATHS. DIRECT US IN THE WAY YOU WANT US TO GO. AMEN.

*People continue in silent prayer as the organist plays*

#### **ASSURANCE OF GOD'S FORGIVENESS**

Minister: Rejoice, people of God, because Jesus Christ came to forgive us our sins. Our guilt is taken away. Our sins are forgiven.

People: WE RECEIVE GOD'S FORGIVENESS AND LEAVE BEHIND HATRED, JUDGMENT, AND REVENGE. BECAUSE GOD LOVES US, WE ARE ENABLED TO TREAT OTHERS AS WE WISH TO BE TREATED.

All (*singing*):

GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS! GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS!  
MOMENT BY MOMENT NEW MERCIES I SEE;  
ALL I HAVE NEEDED THEY HAND HATH PROVIDED.  
GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS, LORD UNTO ME.

### **THE COMMUNITY CELEBRATES UNITY AND BRINGS CONCERNS TO GOD**

#### **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Liturgist: Let us lift up our hearts and share the peace that comes from God.

People: THE LIVING GOD, THE LOVING, MOVING SPIRIT OF GOD HAS CALLED US TO LIVE TOGETHER IN PEACE.

Liturgist: Let us reach out toward each other.

People: FOR OUR GOD REACHES OUT TOWARD US.

All: LET US SHARE GOD'S PEACE.

People share with one another the peace of God as the organist plays.

#### **COMMUNITY CONCERNS**

#### **CALL TO PRAYER**

Minister: We hear you call our name, Merciful God, and we want to follow you.

People: YOU KNOW OUR FAITH, OUR LOVE, OUR STEADFASTNESS, OUR NEEDS.  
All: YOU ALSO KNOW OUR DEVIOUS DESIGNS AND OUR HYPOCRISIES. GRANT THAT AS WE PRAY TOGETHER, WE MAY KNOW AGAIN THE POWER OF YOUR HOLY SPIRIT TRANSFORMING OUR LIVES AND INFORMING OUR DECISIONS.

### **THE CHURCH AT PRAYER**

#### **CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE**

*Spirit, who doth our prayers attend,  
On us now in thy power descend  
Thine the presence for which we crave,  
Thine the world that alone can save. Amen*

### **THE COMMUNITY LISTENS TO THE WORD OF GOD**

#### **READING OF THE SCRIPTURES**

Liturgist: O God, again we seek your word of truth. May we be attentive to your wisdom and open to your will for us.  
People: SHARPEN OUR INSIGHT AND DEEPEN OUR COMMITMENT. ALMIGHTY GOD. MOVE US TO BE DOERS OF THE WORD, AND NOT HEARERS ONLY.  
Isaiah 57:14-21 (OT, 805)  
John 14:27-31 (NT, 146)  
Liturgist: This is the word of God for us today.  
People: MAY GOD'S WORD GUIDE US TO BE FAITHFUL WITNESSES OF THE GOOD NEWS OF LOVE.

### **ANTHEM/SONG OF PARTICIPATION**

#### **MEDITATION**

### **THE COMMUNITY DEDICATES ITSELF TO GOD**

#### **CALL TO OFFERING**

Liturgist: Let us now affirm our faith in God.  
All: WE BELIEVE THAT GOD, THE CREATOR AND LORD OF THE UNIVERSE, KNOWS AND CARES FOR EVERY PERSON. WE BELIEVE THAT GOD MAKES HIMSELF REAL TO US TODAY, THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES, THROUGH OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST, AND THROUGH LIVES OF BELIEVERS.  
Women: We believe that God's Spirit is available every moment,  
All: TO CONVICT US OF OUR SINFUL, SELFISH WAYS, AND TO ENABLE US TO RISE ABOVE OURSELVES INTO A CHRIST-LIKE LIFE.  
Men: We believe that God has a mission for us,  
All: TO MINISTER IN GOD'S NAME, AND TO SHARE HIS LOVE AND BLESSINGS WITH THE NEEDY OF OUR OWN COMMUNITY AND OF EVERY RACE AND NATION.  
Liturgist: We believe that, as we offer God our lives, our love, our talents, our offerings,  
All: GOD WILL BRING RICH MEANING INTO OUR LIVES AND WILL USE US AS INSTRUMENTS TO HELP OTHERS KNOW LIFE IN CHRIST.

### **OFFERING OF LIFE AND LABOR**

#### **SONG OF THANKSGIVING**

#### **OFFERTORY PRAYER**

Liturgist: Our help is in the Lord.



People: MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH!  
Liturgist: Lift up your hearts!  
People: WE LIFT THEM UP TO GOD IN THANKSGIVING!  
All: CREATOR AND REDEEMER, MAY YOU USE OUR OFFERINGS OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE PREACHING OF THE GOOD NEWS OF YOUR LOVE; FOR THE TEACHING OF JESUS' WAY OF LIFE; FOR THE CARING OF THE NEEDY; AND FOR LEADING PEOPLE TO KNOW YOUR LOVE IN CHRIST. CONSECRATE AND ENABLE US TO PROCLAIM YOUR LOVE TO OTHERS; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

#### **HYMN OF DEDICATION**

#### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

#### **THE BLESSING**

Minister: May every blessing rest upon you, people of God, as you continue in your faithfulness.  
People: WE CARRY A VIVID AWARENESS OF GOD'S BLESSING INTO A NEW SEASON AND A NEW YEAR.  
Minister: God is at work in you, God is served through deeds that enhance life.  
People: WE REJOICE IN THE OPPORTUNITY TO REACH OUT TO SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN NEED.  
Minister: Tell the world the savior has come!  
People: WE HAVE GOOD NEWS TO SHARE!  
Minister: The Lord bless you and keep you. May the face of God shine upon you, and be gracious to you.  
People: MAY GOD'S WILL BE KNOWN TO US, AS GOD GRANTS US PEACE AND ENABLES US TO SERVE.  
All: SO BE IT. AMEN!

#### **CHORAL RESPONSE**

#### **POSTLUDE** (*In Silent Meditation*)

May Jesus Christ, the king of glory, help us to make the right use of all the myrrh that God sends, and to offer to God the true incense in our hearts; for his name's sake, Amen.

## **ORDER OF ASH WEDNESDAY**

#### **PRELUDE**

The service may begin with music as the congregation gathers in a penitential atmosphere.

#### **GREETINGS**

All who are able may stand. This or another Lenten greeting may be used.

Leader: Jesus came to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to liberate those who are oppressed, and to proclaim the year of God's favor.

#### **HYMN OF ADORATION**

#### **CONFESSION OF SIN**

The people may be seated. A leader may use these or other words to invite confession.

Leader: As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are called to struggle against everything that leads us away from the love of God and neighbor. Repentance, fasting, prayer, study, and works of love help us return to that love. I invite you, therefore, to commit yourselves to love and God and neighbor by confessing your sin and by asking God for strength to persevere in your Lenten discipline.

Silence may be observed for reflection and prayer.

The one presiding may lead the people in confession. A period of silence also may be included following each response.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: MOST HOLY AND MERCIFUL GOD: WE CONFESS TO YOU AND TO ONE ANOTHER, AND TO THE WHOLE COMMUNION OF SAINTS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH, THAT WE HAVE SINNED BY OUR OWN FAULT IN THOUGHT, WORD, AND DEED, BY WHAT WE HAVE DONE, BUT BY WHAT WE HAVE LEFT UNDONE.

Leader: We have not loved you with all our heart, and mind, and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We have not forgiven others as we have been forgiven.

People: HAVE MERCY ON US, O GOD.

Leader: We have been deaf to your call to serve as Christ served us. We have not been true to the mind of Christ. We have grieved your Holy Spirit.

People: HAVE MERCY ON US, O GOD.

Leader: We confess to you, O God, all our past unfaithfulness. The pride, hypocrisy, and impatience in our lives.

People: WE CONFESS TO YOU, O GOD.

Leader: Our self-indulgent appetites and ways and our exploitation of other people.

People: WE CONFESS TO YOU, O GOD.

Leader: Our anger at our own frustration and our envy of those more fortunate than ourselves.

People: WE CONFESS TO YOU, O GOD.

Leader: Our intemperate love of worldly goods and comforts and our dishonesty in our daily life and work.

People: WE CONFESS TO YOU, O GOD.

Leader: Our negligence in prayer and worship and our failure to commend the faith that is in us.

People: WE CONFESS TO YOU, O GOD.

Leader: Accept our repentance, O God, for the wrongs we have done. For our neglect of human need and suffering and our indifference to injustice and cruelty.

People: ACCEPT OUR REPENTANCE, O GOD.

Leader: For all false judgments, for uncharitable thoughts toward our neighbor, and for our prejudice and contempt toward those who differ from us,

People: ACCEPT OUR REPENTANCE, O GOD.

Leader: For our waste and pollution of your creation and our lack of concern for those who come after us.

People: ACCEPT OUR REPENTANCE, O GOD.

Leader: Restore us, O God, and let your anger depart from us.

People: FAVORABLY HEAR US, O GOD, FOR YOUR MERCY IS GREAT. AMEN.

Silence may be observed for confession and prayer.

In his or her own words, a leader may invite those who wish to receive ashes to come forward. Recipients who are able may kneel or stand. The leader may apply ashes to the forehead of each person with these or other words.

(A) Leader: Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return.

(B) Leader: Turn away from your sins and believe the good news.

After all who wish receive ashes have received them, the prayers of confession may be concluded with these or other words.

Leader: Accomplish in us, O God, the work of your salvation,

People: THAT WE MAY SHOW FORTH YOUR GLORY.

Leader: By the cross and passion of our salvation,

People: BRING US WITH ALL YOUR SAINTS TO THE JOY OF CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.

All: AMEN.

Leader: *Addressing the congregation*

Almighty God does not desire the death of sinners, but rather that they may turn from their wickedness and live. Therefore we implore God to grant us true repentance and the Holy Spirit that those things which we do this day may be pleasing to God, that the rest of our lives may be lived faithfully, and that at the last we may come to God's eternal joy; the Jesus the Christ.

All: THANK BE TO GOD!

At the conclusion of this order, a hymn may be sung. A Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word follows, beginning with the reading of Scripture and omitting the elements that have occurred during this order.

## ORDER FOR PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

### GATHERING

The people may assemble informally in a special place outdoors, in a parish hall, or in a usual place of worship. Palm branches or cuttings of evergreen or other trees may be distributed to all as they arrive or may be placed where they are visible to all present and may be distributed after the blessing. The church bell may be sounded to announce the beginning of the service.

### GREETINGS

The one presiding may give necessary instructions and may lead a responsive greeting with these or similar words.

(A) Leader: Hosanna!

People: HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.

All: PRAISE BE TO GOD!

(B) Leader: Lift your heads and behold, Emmanuel, "God with us."

People: BEHOLD OUR GOD WHO COMES RIDING ON AN ASS, THE RULER WHO DARES TO BE LAST RATHER THAN FIRST.

### PRAYER

Leader: Christ is with us.

People: CHRIST IS OUR MIDST.

Leader: Let us pray.

People: MERCIFUL GOD, AS WE ENTER HOLY WEEK AND GATHER AT YOUR HOUSE OF PRAYER, TURN OUR HEART AGAIN TO JERUSALEM, TO THE LIFE, DEATH, AND RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST, THAT UNITED WITH CHRIST AND ALL THE FAITHFUL WE MAY ONE DAY ENTER IN TRIUMPH THE CITY NOT MADE BY HUMAN HANDS, THE NEW JERUSALEM, ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS, WHERE WITH YOU AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, CHRIST LIVES IN GLORY FOR EVER. AMEN.

### READING OF THE PALM SUNDAY GOSPEL

The account Jesus' entry into Jerusalem may be read. The people may stand or sit depending upon physical arrangements, individuals' abilities, and local custom. The ecumenical lectionary suggests the following cycle of Gospel lessons.

Year A: Matthew 21:1-11

Year B: Mark 11:1-11 or John 12:12-16  
Year C: Luke 19:28-40

### **BLESSING OF THE PALMS**

The one presiding may lead the congregation in a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing using these or similar words.

Leader: God be with you.  
People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.  
Leader: Let us give thanks to God Most High.  
People: IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE GOD THANKS AND PRAISE.  
Leader: Let us pray.  
All: O GOD, WHO IN JESUS CHRIST TRIUMPHANTLY ENTERED JERUSALEM, HERALDING A WEEK OF PAIN AND SORROW, BE WITH US NOW AS WE FOLLOW THE WAY OF THE CROSS. IN THESE EVENTS OF DEFEAT AND VICTORY, YOU HAVE SEALED THE CLOSENESS OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION, OF HUMILIATION AND EXALTATION. WE THANK YOU FOR THESE BRANCHES THAT PROMISE TO BECOME FOR US SYMBOLS OF MARTYRDOM AND MAJESTY. BLESS THEM AND US THAT THEIR USE THIS DAY MAY ANNOUNCE IN OUR TIME THAT CHRIST HAS COME AND THAT CHRIST WILL COME AGAIN. AMEN! COME, CHRIST JESUS!

If the palms were not distributed earlier, they may be distributed at this time. If there is to be a procession into or around the sanctuary, the following words may be used to introduce it.

Leader: Let us go forth in peace.  
People: IN THE NAME OF CHRIST. AMEN.

### **HYMN OF ADORATION**

A suitable hymn may be sung as all enter the sanctuary or as the choir and worship leaders process to their places.

### **COLLECT FOR ILLUMINATION**

The people may be seated. This collect or another asking for open hearts and attentive minds may be used prior to the first lesson.

Leader: Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God.  
People: ETERNAL GOD, WHOSE WHISPER SILENCES THE SHOUTS OF THE MIGHTY, QUIET WITHIN US EVERY VOICE BUT YOUR OWN. SPEAK TO US NOW THROUGH THE SUFFERING AND DEATH OF JESUS CHRIST WE MAY RECEIVE GRACE TO SHOW FORTH CHRIST'S LOVE IN LIVES COMMITTED TO YOUR SERVICE.  
All: AMEN.

### **READING OF THE SCRIPTURE**

It is fitting on Passion Sunday that in addition to the Old Testament and Epistle lessons, chosen according to the lectionary suggestions, the Gospel of Christ's passion be read in dramatic form as the final lesson. With the congregation seated, a narrator and individuals or groups assigned the parts of the speakers in the lesson may recite it in full, reading with dramatic effect. Several rehearsals may be needed.

The ecumenical lectionary suggests the following cycle passion lessons to be read following the selected Old Testament and Epistle lessons.

Year A: Matthew 26:14 through Matthew 27:66  
Year B: Mark 14:1 through Mark 15:47  
Year C: Luke 22:14 through Luke 23:56

A Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word follows, beginning at the point after the reading of scripture and omitting the elements that have occurred.

## ORDER OF FOOTWASHING FOR MAUNDY THURSDAY

If footwashing is to be included within another service, following the sermon all who are able may stand and unite in an affirmation of faith and hymn. The lesson from John may be read and in part or full. The Order for Footwashing may begin with the introduction on page 203.

### CALL TO WORSHIP

All who are able may stand. A leader may open the service with these or other words.

(A) Leader: Make a joyful noise to the Holy One, all the lands! Serve God with gladness! Come into God's presence with singing!

People: FOR THE HOLY ONE IS GOOD; GOD'S STEADFAST LOVE ENDURES FOR EVER, AND GOD'S FAITHFULNESS TO ALL GENERATIONS.

(B) Leader: Create in Inc a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.

People: CAST ME NOT AWAY FROM YOUR PRESENCE, AND TAKE NOT YOUR HOLY SPIRIT FROM ME.

Leader: Purge me from my sin, and I shall be pure;

People: WASH ME, AND I SHALL BE CLEAN INDEED.

### HYMN

All who are able may stand as hymn about service, humility, penitence, or related themes is sung.

### CONFESSION OF SIN

All may be seated or those who are able may kneel. The person presiding may lead the people in confession, using these or other words.

Leader: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

People: IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, GOD IS FAITHFUL AND JUST AND WILL FORGIVE OUR SINS AND CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

Leader: Brothers and sisters in Christ, let us confess our sins in silence and ask God for the forgiveness we need.

*Extended silence may follow for reflection and prayer.*

Leader: Let us pray.

(A) All: GRACIOUS GOD, WE HAVE DENIED YOUR INTENTIONS FOR US. WE HAVE PREFERRED OUR WAY TO CHRIST'S WAY. WE HAVE SERVED OURSELVES AND THINGS WE HAVE MADE. WE HAVE DISOBEYED YOUR COMMAND-MENT TO LOVE OTHERS AS WE LOVE OURSELVES AND THINGS WE HAVE MADE: WE DISOBEYED YOUR COM-MANDMENT TO LOVE OTHERS AS WE HAVE LOVE OUR SELVES. FORGIVE US AND AWAKEN US TO FAITH AND TO A LIFE OF SERVICE; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, WHO CAME NOT TO BE SERVED, BUT TO SERVE, AND WHO SERVED YOU EVEN TO DEATH, FOR OUR REDEMPTION. AMEN.

(B) All: HAVE MERCY ON ME, O GOD, ACCORDING TO YOUR LOVING-KINDNESS; IN YOUR GREAT COMPASSION BLOT MY OFFENSES. WASH ME THROUGH AND THROUGH FROM MY WICKEDNESS AND CLEANSE ME FROM MY SIN. FOR I KNOW MY TRANSGRESSIONS, AND MY SIN IS EVER BEFORE ME. AMEN.

### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

(A) Leader: While we were yet helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

People: THE LOVE OF GOD FOR US IS SHOWN IN THIS: WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS, CHRIST DIED FOR US.

(B) Leader: We have, then, my sisters and brothers, complete freedom to go into the most holy place, God's very presence, by means of the death of Jesus.

People: WE HAVE GREAT PRIEST IN CHARGE OF THE HOUSE OF GOD.

Leader: So let us come near to God with a sincere heart and a sure faith;

People: WITH HEARTS THAT HAVE BEEN PURIFIED FROM A GUILTY CONSCIENCE, AND WITH BODES WASH WITH CLEAN WATER.

### TELLING THE STORY

The people may sit or those who are able may stand. The reading may be spoken by one voice, used as a responsive reading, or presented dramatically by a narrator and two others taking the roles of Jesus and of Peter.

Narrator (Leader): it was now the day before the Passover festival. Jesus and his disciples were at supper. So Jesus rose from the table, took off his outer garment, and tied a towel around his waist. Then Jesus poured some water into a washbasin and begun to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist.

Jesus came to Simon Peter, who said to him:

Peter (People): ARE YOU GOING TO WASH MY FEET, LORD?

Narrator (Leader): Jesus Answered Peter:

Jesus (People): YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND NOW WHAT I AM DOING, BUT YOU WILL UNDERSTAND LATER.

Narrator (Leader): Peter declared:

Peter (People): NEVER AT ANYTIME WILL YOU WASH MY FEET!

Narrator (Leader): Jesus answered:

Jesus (People): IF I DO NOT WASH YOUR FEE, YOU WILL NO LONGER BE MY DISCIPLE.

Narrator (Leader): Simon Peter answered:

Peter (People): LORD DO NOT ONLY WASH MY FEET, THEN! WASH MY HANDS AND HEAD, TOO!

Narrator (Leader): Jesus said:

Jesus (People): ANYONE WHO HAS TAKEN A BATH IS COMPLETELY CLEAN AND DOES NOT HAVE TO WASH, OTHER THAN THE FEET.

Narrator (Leader): After washing their feet, Jesus put the outer garment back on, returned to his place at the table, and said:

Jesus (People): DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT I HAVE JUST DONE TO YOU?

YOU CALL ME TEACHER AND LORD, AND IT IS RIGHT THAT YOU DO SO, BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT I AM.

I, YOUR LORD AND TEACHER, HAVE JUST WASHED YOUR FEET. YOU, THEN, SHOULD WASH ONE ANOTHER'S FEET. I HAVE SET AN EXAMPLE FOR YOU, SO THAT YOU WILL DO JUST WHAT I HAVE DONE FOR YOU.

*Silence may be observed for reflection before the lesson is concluded.*

Narrator (Leader): Jesus said:

Jesus (People): I AM TELLING YOU THE TRUTH: NO SLAVE IS GREATER THAN THE MASTER WHO IS SERVED, AND NO MESSENGER IS GREATER THAN THE ONE WHO SENDS THE MESSAGE. NOW THAT YOU KNOW THIS TRUTH, HOW HAPPY YOU WILL BE IF YOU PUT IT INTO PRACTICE.

### SERMON

## HYMN

*All who are able may stand.*

## INTRODUCTION

All who are able may stand as a leader introduces footwashing in the following or similar words. Following this introduction, others may assist in directing the people in the procedures to be carried out.

Leader: Friend in Christ, we are reminded by the scriptures, in diverse words and symbols, of what God intends for us. The water of our baptism is a cleansing sign of our dying and rising with Christ.

The bread and wine of Holy Communion are saving food, announcing to us again Christ's sacrifice and victory for our salvation.

Now, at Christ's command, we share the water of humility, and stoop, as once Christ stooped, to wash the feet of others.

*(A) for use when all participate in footwashing.*

Leader: With Peter, we also open ourselves to another and allow our feet to be washed.

People: HOW HAPPY WE WILL BE IF WE PUT INTO PRACTICE THE TRUTH OF HUMILITY.

*(B) for use when only representatives participate in footwashing.*

Leader: How happy we will be if we put into practice the truth of humility.

People: WITH GOD'S HELP, MAY WE EACH PRACTICE HUMILITY.

## FOOTWASHING

The people may be seated for the footwashing. Those who wish to participate may remove their footwear and place it under their chairs. If the footwashing is to be done by representatives only, those chosen to have their feet washed may move to the front of the congregation, be seated in chairs provided, remove their footwear, and place it under their chairs.

To begin the footwashing, a deacon or another appointed person kneels before the person in the next seat, that person's feet in the basin one at a time, lifts and dries each foot, and rise. The person whose feet have been washed also may rise, exchange the peace with the one who did the washing, and likewise turn to the person sitting next, kneel, and repeat the footwashing. People who have their feet washed and have washed the feet of another may be seated and replace their footwear. The feet of the one who begun the footwashing are to be washed before the cycle is completed. Adjustment will need to be made for those whose abilities do not include some of these physical movements.

If this is to be done by representatives only, the one presiding or another appointed officer of the church may wash the feet of each of the representatives and may also greet each in an exchange of peace.

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

When the footwashing is completed, all who are able may stand. The one presiding may lead the people in this or another prayer of thanksgiving.

Leader: Let us pray.

All: O GOD, WE GIVE YOU THANKS FOR THE GIFT OF JESUS CHRIST, THE ONLY ONE BEGOTTEN BY YOU BEFORE ALL WORLDS. WE THANK YOU FOR THE SPLENDOR OF CHRIST'S LIFE OF SERVICE. WE THANK YOU FOR SYMBOLS OF LOVE AND HUMILITY. WE ASK THAT YOU WILL STRENGTHEN US FOR THE SERVICE TO WHICH YOU CALL US, THAT WE MAY FIND IN LOWERING OURSELVES, IN WASHING, AND IN ALL OTHER ACTS OF MERCY, THE FULLNESS OF LIFE THAT WE SEE IN JESUS CHRIST, WHO WITH YOU AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, LIVES IN EXALTATION, ONE GOD, FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.

When this order is observed alone, the service may be concluded with a hymn and a benediction. When it is incorporated within a Services of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word, that service continues, omitting the affirm Lion of faith.

## **ORDER OF THE TABLE FOR MAUNDY THURSDAY**

### **ARRIVAL AND INFORMAL GREETING**

If possible have subdued lighting. As the people arrive, the candles may be lighted. People may be encouraged to greet one another and to gather around tables set in advance for the meal.

### **GREETING**

At the appointed time, the pastor, or another representative may greet those gathered in the name of Jesus Christ, welcome them to the service, and lead them in a litany.

Leader: We are gathered in the presence of God, who asks us to choose between life and death, between blessing and curse.

People: WE ARE GATHERED LIKE THE PEOPLE OF ISRAEL, WHO WERE CHALLENGED TO CHOOSE THE WAY OF LIFE.

Leader: Like them, we often follow the ways of death.

People: YET, LIKE THEM, WE HAVE THE FREEDOM EACH DAY TO BEGIN ANEW BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

Leader: By our presence here, we are saying that we choose life.

All: LET US PRAISE THE GOD OF LOVE AND LIVE WHO CALLED US TO THIS PLACE. AMEN.

### **PRAYER**

A leader may offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the day and the meal.

### **MEAL**

A simple meal may be shared and the tables cleared, leaving individual glasses and candles.

### **INTRODUCTION**

A leader may offer words of greeting and introduction.

### **HYMN**

Words may be printed on an order of service.

### **READING OF SCRIPTURE**

The lessons for Maundy Thursday may be read. The ecumenical lectionary suggests Psalm 116:12-19 and:

Year A: Exodus 12:1-14; I Corinthians 11:23-26; John 13:1-15

Year B: Exodus 24:3-8; 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; Mark 14:12-26

Year C: Jeremiah 31:21-24; Hebrew 10:16-25; Luke 22:7-20

### **MEDITATION**

A leader may offer a brief sermon on the lessons.

### **SILENCE**

The people may be invited to prepare themselves for Holy Communion by joining in silence, reflection, confession at the tables.

### **INVITATION**



Leader: This table is open to all who confess Jesus as the Christ and seek to follow Christ's way. Come to the sacred table not because you must, but because you may. Come not because you are fulfilled, but because in your emptiness you stand in need of God's mercy and assurance. Come not to express an opinion, but to seek a presence and to pray for a spirit. Come to this table, then, sisters and brothers, as you are. Partake and share. It is spread for you and me that we might again know that God has come to us, shared our common lot, and invited us to join the people of God's new age.

### **COMMUNION PRAYER**

The pastor may offer a prayer of consecration and thanksgiving using his or her own words or one of the prayers from the Services of Word and Sacrament. Elements of the prayer are outlined on page 49.

### **PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR**

### **SHARING THE ELEMENTS**

The deacons or other representatives may come to the primary table and receive a pitcher and a loaf for each table. At the tables, each person may break the bread and pass it, then may fill a glass and pass the pitcher. A familiar hymn, such as "Let us Break Bread Together," may be sung during the passing of the elements. According to the custom of the church, individuals may partake as the elements reach them or may hold each element so that all may partake together.

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

Leader: O God, by coming to your table we receive more gifts than we deserve. We give thanks for Jesus Christ, through whom we receive the life and in whom we are bound in covenant. Renew *us* so we may willingly serve as Christ served. Amen.

### **HYMN OF THANKSGIVING**

All may sing the last stanza of "Let us Break Bread Together," or another hymn of thanksgiving.

### **DISMISSAL AND BENEDICTION**

A leader may dismiss the people with words of comfort and challenge and a blessing informed by scripture.

## **ORDER FOR TENEBRAE FOR HOLY THURSDAY**

When Tenebrae is observed as a full service, the complete order below may be used. When it is incorporated within another service, only the reading and extinguishing lights need to be used, with consideration given to the instructions for departure.

All candles may remain unlighted until "O Gracious Light" or an anthem is sung at the time designated for lighting them.

### **PRELUDE**

The service may begin with a music as the congregation gathers.

### **SENTENCES**

All who are able may stand for one or both of these.

(A) Leader: Jesus said: "I am the light of the world."

People: ANYONE WHO FOLLOWS ME WILL NOT WALK IN DARKNESS, BUT WILL HAVE THE LIGHT OF LIFE.

(B) Leader: If I say, "Let the darkness cover me, and the light around me turn to night," darkness is not dark to you, O God.

People: THE NIGHT IS AS BRIGHT AS THE DAY; DARKNESS AND LIGHT TO YOU ARE BOTH ALIKE.

## HYMN OF ADORATION

All who are able may stand as a hymn on the theme of God's light is sung.

## COLLECT

All who are able may stand while this or another opening prayer is said. Leader: God be with you.

People: AND ALSO WITH YOU.

All: GRACIOUS GOD, YOU GIVE US THE SUN TO ILLUMINE THE DAY AND THE MOON AND STARS TO SHINE BY NIGHT. KINDLE IN US THE FLAME OF YOUR LOVE THAT OUR LIVES MAY SHED ABROAD THE RADLANCE OF YOUR LIGHT AND THE WORLD MAY BE FULL OF THE SPLENDOR OF YOUR GLORY; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. AMEN.

## LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

The people may be seated. The candles to be used in the service may be lighted during the singing of "O Gracious Light" or another hymn. The text here is adapted from the ancient version of the "Phos Hilaron."

All: O GRACIOUS LIGHT, PURE BRIGHTNESS OF THE ETERNAL CREATOR IN HEAVE, O JESUS CHRIST, HOLY AND BLESSED!

NOW AS WE COME TO THE SETTING OF THE SUN, AND OUR EYES BEHOLD YOUR VESPER LIGHT, WE SING YOUR PRAISES, HOLY GOD, ON IN TRINITY.

YOU ARE WORTHY AT ALL TIMES, TO BE PRAISED BY HAPPY VOICES, O CHRIST OF GOD, O GIVER OF LIFE, AND TO BE GLORIFIED THROUGH ALL THE WORLDS.

## CONFESSION OF SIN

The people may be seated or those who are able may kneel. A leader may invite the people to confess in silence or may incorporate a unison prayer and silence. This or another call to confession and prayer may be used.

Leader: Brothers and sisters, we called to be children of the day and not children of the night.

People: LET US APPROACH THE THRONE OF GRACE THAT WE MAY RECEIVE MERCY.

Leader: Let us pray.

All: GRACIOUS GOD, OUR SINS ARE TOO HEAVY TO CARRY, TOO REAL TO HIDE, AND TOO DEEP TO UNDO. FORGIVE WHAT OUR LIPS TREMBLE TO NAME, WHAT OUR HEARTS CAN NO LONGER BEAR, AND WHAT HAS BECOME OF US A CONSUMING

FIRE OF JUDGMENT, SET US FREE FROM A PAST THAT WE CANNOT CHANGE; OPEN TO US A FUTURE IN WHICH WE CAN CHANGED; AND GRANT GRACE TO GROW MORE AND MORE IN YOUR LIKENESS AND IMAGE; THROUGH JESUS CHRIST, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. AMEN.

## PRAYER OF MERCY

The Kyrie, Trisagion, or another prayer for mercy may be said or sung. Musical settings are on pages 449, 450, and 459.

(A) Leader: Lord, have mercy.

People: CHRIST, HAVE MERCY.

Leader: Lord, have mercy.

(B) Leader: Holy God, Holy and mighty, Holy immortal One,

All: HAVE MERCY UPON US.

## ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: This is the message we have heard from Christ and proclaim to you: God is light.

People: IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT AS CHRIST IS IN THE LIGHT, WE HAVE COMMUNION WITH ONE ANOTHER, AND THE BLOOD OF JESUS CHRIST CLEANSSES US FROM ALL SIN.

## HYMN, ANTHEM, OR OTHER MUSIC

*A hymn, anthem, or other music about Christ's passion may be offered.*

## READING AND EXTINGUISHING OF LIGHTS

The people may be seated. When used in Service of Word and Sacrament, this ceremony may follow the post communion hymn. When used in a Service of the Word, it may replace the reading of scripture.

As a dramatic portrayal of the desertion of Christ by the disciples, twelve people extinguish the candles and leave the room in sequence. These same people may read the assigned lessons. Diverse number of readings and candles may be used. If twelve readings are chosen, one candle may be extinguished after each reading. If fewer than twelve readings are chosen, those without lessons may extinguish their candles in silence, one at a time. The Christ candle may be extinguished or momentarily hidden.

The schedule of readings includes eight lessons taken from all four Gospels. If twelve lessons are desired, then other appropriate ones may be added. An alternative schedule may also be developed by dividing into twelve sections the long passion narrative in the Gospel of John (Chapters 13-19).

When this order is used on Maundy Thursday following Holy Communion, it is suggested that the candles and twelve representatives be placed about an extended communion table. The lessons may be read while the representatives are seated. After each lesson, the reader may extinguish a candle and leave the room.

### First reading

Shadow of Betrayer — Matthew 26:20-25

Candle one is extinguished; *the reader may leave the room.*

### Second reading

Shadow of Desertion — Matthew 26:31-35

Candle two is extinguished; *the reader may leave the room.*

### Third reading

Agony of the Soul — Luke 22:39-44

Candle three is extinguished; *the reader may leave the room.*

### Fourth reading

Unshared Vigil — Mark 14:32-41

Candle four is extinguished; *the reader may leave the room.*

### Fifth reading

"Father, the hour is come" — John 13:1-6

Candle five is extinguished; *the reader may leave the room.*

### Sixth reading

"That they may be all be one" — John 17:15-22

Candle six is extinguished; *the reader may leave the room.*

### Seventh reading

Arrest in the Garden — John 18:1-5

Candle seven is extinguished; *the reader may leave the room.*

### Eight reading

Shadow of the Cross — Mark 15:16-20

Candle eight is extinguished; *the reader may leave the room.*

In silence, the remaining four candles representing the disciples are extinguished in sequence by four people who may also leave the room.

### Final Reading

The Word was God — John 1:1-4, 14, 10, 12; 3:19, paraphrased

A person may lead these or other appropriate verses from a location near the central Christ candle.

#### **READER**

Before the world was created, the Word already existed; the Word was with God, and the Word was the same as God. From the beginning the Word was with God. Through the Word God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without the Word. The Word was the source of Life, and this life brought light to humanity.

The Word became a human being and, full of grace and truth, lived among us.

The Word was in the world; and though God made the World through the Word, the world did not recognize the Word. Some, however, did receive the Word. So the Word gave them the right to become God's children.

This is how the judgment works: The light has come into the world, but people love the shadows rather than the light, because their deeds are evil.

At the conclusion of the reading, the reader may extinguish the Christ candle or may remove it from the vision of the people. A loud noise may be made as this is done to signify Christ's death. After a pause, the candle may be relighted or returned to its place to stand as symbolic promise of the resurrection.

#### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Standing, sitting or kneeling, all may sing or say the prayer received from Jesus Christ.

#### **DEPARTURE**

All may leave the darkened church in silence. The continuity of events leading to Easter is best symbolized if the benediction is omitted at this service. A vigil may begin at the conclusion of this order in churches where one is observed from Maundy Thursday until the first service of Easter.

## **ORDER OF GOOD FRIDAY**

The service is often without instrumental music except to support singing by the congregation. The leaders may enter in silence.

#### **SENTENCES**

All who are able may stand. A leader may offer the following and/or other sentences from scripture.

Leader: Blessed be our God, for ever and ever. Amen.

#### **INVOCATION**

All who are able may stand.

Leader: Let us pray.

All: ALMIGHTY GOD, WE ASK YOU TO LOOK WITH MERCY ON YOUR FAMILY FOR WHOM OUR SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST WAS WILLING TO BE BETRAYED, TO BE GIVEN OVER TO THE HANDS OF SINNERS, AND TO SUFFER DEATH ON THE CROSS; WHO NOW LIVES AND REIGNS WITH YOU AND THE HOLY SPIRIT, ONE GOD, FOR EVER AND EVER. AMEN.

#### **READING OF THE SCRIPTURE**

The people may be seated as Hosea 6:1-6, Isaiah 52:13; 53:12, or other scripture passages are read.

#### **SILENCE**

Silence may be observed for reflection and prayer.

#### **HYMN**

All who are able may stand as "O Sacred Head, Now Wounded" or another hymn is sung.

## READING OF THE PASSION STORY

The passion story may be read by one person, or a different person may read each part.

- Part I — Mark 9:30-37; 10:17-23, 46-52
- Part II — Mark 11:1-11; 14:1-25; John 13:2-17
- Part III — John 12:20-28; 13:31; 14:10; Matthew 26:36-56
- Part IV — John 17:1-10; 17:16-23; Luke 22:54-71; Matthew 27:3-10
- Part V — Mark 15:1-14; Luke 23:4-11; Matthew 27:11-31
- Part VI — (Seven Last Words)
  - Luke 23:26-32; Matthew 27:33, 34, 37; Luke 23:35, 36; 23:34, 39-43; John 19:25-27; Luke 23:44-45; Matthew 27:46; John 19:28-30; Luke 23:46
- Part VII — Matthew 27:51-66

## HYMN

All who are able may stand for a hymn on a passion theme.

## SERMON

## PRAYER

A leader may guide the people in a bidding prayer, with silence for the prayers of the people. Some or all of the following sections may be used. Leader: Let us pray, brothers and sisters, for the holy church of God throughout the world that God may guide it and gather it together so that we may worship God in peace and tranquility.

*Silent prayer*

Leader: Holy and eternal God, you have shown your glory to all nations in Jesus Christ. Guide the work of the church. Help it to persevere the faith, to proclaim your name, and to offer salvation to people everywhere. We ask this through Christ our Savior. People: AMEN.

Leader: Let us pray for our pastor(s) and other ordained ministers, for all servants of the church, and for the people of God.

*Silent prayer.*

Leader: Holy and eternal God, your Spirit guides the church and makes it holy. Strengthen and uphold our pastor(s) and our leaders; keep them in health and in safety for the good of the church, and help each of us to faithfully the work to which you have called us. We ask this through Christ our Savior.

People: AMEN.

Leader: Let us pray for those preparing for baptism, that God may make them responsive to God's love and give them new in Jesus Christ.

*Silent prayer*

Leader: Holy and eternal God, you continually bless the church with new members. Increase the faith and understanding of those pre-paring for baptism. Give them a new birth as your children. Keep them in the faith and communion of your holy church. We ask this through Christ and Savior.

People: AMEN.

Leader: Let us pray for those who do not believe in Christ, that the light of the Holy Spirit may show them the way of salvation.

*Silent prayer*

Leader: Holy and eternal God, enable those who do not acknowledge Christ to receive the troth of the Gospel. Help us your people, to grow in love for another, to grasp more fully the mystery of your Godhead, and so to become more perfect witnesses your love in the sight of all people. We ask this through Christ our Savior.

People: AMEN.

Leader: Let us pray for those who do not believe in God, that they may find the God who is the author and goal of our existence.

*Silent prayer*

Leader: Holy and eternal God, you created humanity so all might long to know you and. have peace in you. Grant that, in spite of the hurtful things that stand in their way, all may recognize in the lives of Christians the tokens of your love and mercy and gladly acknowledge you as the one true God of us all. We ask this through Christ our Savior.

People: AMEN.

Leader: Let us pray for those who serve in public, that God may guide their minds and hearts, so that all of us may live in true peace and freedom.

*Silent prayer*

Leader: Holy and eternal God, you are the champion of the poor and oppressed. In your goodness, watch over those in authority so that people everywhere may enjoy justice, peace, freedom, and a share in the goodness of your creation. We ask this through Christ our Savior.

People: AMEN.

Leader: Let us pray that the almighty and merciful God may heal the sick, comfort the dying, give safety to travelers, free those unjustly deprived of liberty, and rid the world of falsehood, hunger and disease.

*Silent prayer*

Leader: Holy and eternal God, you give strength to the weary and new courage to those who have lost heart. Hear the prayers of all who call on you in any trouble that they may have the joy of receiving your help in their need. We ask this through Christ our Savior.

People: AMEN.

**PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR**

Standing, sitting, or kneeling, all may sing Or say the prayer received from Jesus Christ.

**MEDITATION ABOUT THE CROSS**

If a cross is a focal point for the congregation, the following may be said:

Leader: Behold the cross on which hung the salvation of the whole world.

People: COME, LET US WORSHIP THE CHRIST, THE CHILD OF GOD.

Leader: Behold the cross on which hung the salvation of the world.

People: COME, LET US WORSHIP THE CHRIST, THE CHILD OF GOD.

Leader: Behold the cross on which hung the salvation of the world.

People: COME, LET US WORSHIP THE CHRIST, THE CHILD OF GOD.

*Silence may be observed for meditation and prayers.*

**HYMN**

A hymn may be sung on the theme of the merciful Christ.

**BENEDICTION**

Leader: We adore you, O Christ, and we bless you.

People: BY YOUR HOLY CROSS YOU HAVE REDEEMED THE WORLD.

The leaders may leave in silence. The people may depart quietly as they finish their private meditation.

## THE COVENANT SERVICE

The idea of a covenant between God and his people is basic to both the Old Testament and the New Testament. (The covenant under Moses marks the beginning of Israel's religion in the Old Testament, while in the New Testament, Jesus initiates the New Covenant which is sealed by the Cross.) God is a covenant-making God; covenant-making expressed as mercy is one of the qualities or attributes of God, for he restores again and again the covenant relationship between himself and his people.

God initiates the covenant binding the people to himself: You shall be my people; I shall be your God. The prophets constantly recalled Israel to be faithful to the covenant and God in his mercy, his steadfast love, constantly renews the covenant.

The covenant thus defines a relationship between God and his people. On his part, God keeps his promises faithfully — creating, judging, redeeming his people; man's response is to obey God's Law.

The Old Testament prophets saw the danger of legalism implied in the idea of covenant and looked for a New Covenant with the law written in the heart. At the Last Supper Jesus indicates that his death shall bring about this New Covenant. Thus Paul says that the Cup is the new covenant in Christ's blood and becomes the pledge of our participation in the new covenant. The covenant must constantly be renewed because of man's faithlessness and this is made possible because of God's faithfulness. For many this covenant renewal takes place in the Holy Communion. Occasions for renewal and times of beginnings are therefore appropriate times to celebrate this necessary renewing of the covenant.

The Covenant Service or Service for the Renewal of a Covenant with God should be used by more Christians today. Filipinos are deeply touched by drama and symbolism and these may be incorporated in such a rite. The suggested order for a Covenant Service here may be used for a New Year's Watch Night service or on other occasions such as the opening of a new schoolyear, or a new season.

## AN ORDER OF A COVENANT SERVICE

### SILENT PRAYERS

As the people enter, they are invited to meditate silently, preferably without any background music.

### CALL TO WORSHIP

Minister/Leader/Liturgist:

Then the one who sits on the throne said, "And now I make all things new!... I'm the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To anyone who is thirsty I will give a free drink of water from the spring of water of life... I will be his God, and he will be my Son." (Rev. 21:5-7)

or

"Listen! I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into his house and eat with him, and he will eat with me... If you have ears, then, listen to what the Spirit says..." (Rev. 3:20, 22)

### THE ACT OF PENITENCE

**HYMN OF PENITENCE** (*Congregation may be seated or kneeling*)

### PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

*Psalm 51*

### SILENT PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The people are invited, to reflect on the words of the Psalms just read and to add their own individual prayers of confession of sin.

## KYRIE ELEISON

The Kyrie or another song of penitence or plea for help may be sung here.

## WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Minister/Leader/Liturgist: Every day is a new day to be born. Jesus said, Your sins are forgiven; go and sin no more."

People: Our life is given back to us with hope.

Minister/Leader/Liturgist: Every day is an opportunity to decide again that this day shall not be like the past.

People: That as of this moment, a new person is created.

Minister/Leader/Liturgist: We are free from bondage to our past.

People: We are free to live fully in the present.

Minister/Leader/Liturgist: The future is open.

All: We will arise, pick up our life, and walk!

## THE ACT OF THANKSGIVING

### HYMN OF THANKSGIVING (*Congregation standing*)

### INVOCATION (*Minister/Leader/Liturgist*)

O God, Beginner of our yesterdays, Mystery of our today, and Hope of our tomorrows, we acknowledge in humility and gratitude our dependence, and praise your Holy Name.

or

Give us a pure heart that we may see thee,  
A humble heart that we may hear thee,  
A heart of love that we may serve thee,  
A heart of faith that we may love thee,  
Thou whom I do not know, but whose I am.

### A PSALM OR AN ANTHEM OF THANKSGIVING

## THE PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S LOVE

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

From the Old Testament (Exodus 20:1-17)

Congregational or Choral Response

From the New Testament (John 15:1-8)

### MEDITATION

This may be on the meaning of God's Covenant with his People or a related subject, incorporating the message of the Lord's Supper for this particular occasion.

### AN ANTHEM OR A HYMN OF PROCLAMATION (*Congregation standing*)

## THE COVENANT

### CALL FOR EXAMINATION OF INDIVIDUAL LIVES

Minister: Let us now, remembering the mercies of God and the hope of his calling, examine ourselves by the light of his Spirit, that we may see wherein we have failed or fallen short in faith and practice and, considering all that this covenant means, may give ourselves anew to God.

### PRAYER OF PREPARATION (*Unison*)

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to your loving kindness; according to the multitude of your tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Amen. (Psalm 51:1-2)



Or silent prayers of preparation may be made by each one.

### **CALL FOR RENEWAL OF COVENANT WITH GOD**

Minister: And now, friends, let us bind ourselves with willing bonds to our covenant God, and take the yoke of Christ upon us.

This taking of his yoke upon us means that we are heartily content that he appoint us our place and work, and that he alone be our reward.

Christ has many services to be done; some are easy, others are difficult; some may bring honor, others bring reproach; some are suitable to our natural inclinations and temporal interests, others are contrary to both. In some we may please Christ and please ourselves; in others we cannot please Christ except by denying ourselves. Yet the power to do all these things is assuredly given us in Christ, who strengthens us.

Therefore let us make the covenant of God our own. Let us engage our heart to the Lord and resolve in his strength never to go back.

Being thus prepared, let us now, in sincere dependence on his grace and trust in his promise, yield ourselves anew to him.

### **PRAYER OF RENEWAL** (*Minister, Congregation kneeling, if possible*)

O Lord God, Holy Father, who has called us through Christ to be partakers in this gracious covenant: We take upon ourselves with joy *the* yoke of obedience, and engage ourselves, for love of you, to seek and do your perfect will. We are no longer our own, but yours.

All: I AM NO LONGER MY OWN, BUT YOURS, PUT ME TO NXTFIAT YOU WILL, RANK ME WITH WHOM YOU WILL; PUT ME TO DO-ING, PUT ME TO SUFFERING; LET ME BE EMPLOYED BY YOU OR LAID ASIDE FOR YOU, EXALTED FOR YOU OR BROUGHT LOW FOR YOU; LET ME BE FULL, LET ME BE EMPTY; LET ME HAVE ALL THINGS; LET ME HAVE NOTHING. I FREELY AND HEARTILY YIELD ALL THINGS TO YOUR PLEASURE AND DIS-POSAL.

And now, O glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine, and I am yours, so be it. And the covenant which I have made on earth, let be ratified in heaven. Amen.

### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING** (*Congregation standing*)

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: WE LIFT THEM UP TO THE LORD.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord.

People: IT IS FITTING AND RIGHT TO DO SO.

Minister: It is fitting, right and our duty that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to you, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God.

Therefore in company with all your people, past, present and to come; with them and all creation we praise you and say:

All: (*singing, if possible*)

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY  
HOLY LORD GOD,  
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY:  
GLORY BE TO YOU, O LORD, MOST HIGH!

### **THE HOLY COMMUNION**

The celebration of Holy Communion may follow, having already begun with the eucharistic prayer above or else a hymn of communion may be sung in preparation for the Lord's Supper. If there is no communion service, a hymn of thanksgiving may be sung, followed by a benediction.

**BENEDICTION** (*Congregation standing*)

The Grace of God be in our eyes  
To minister his gladness

The Grace of God be in our tongues  
To minister his peace

The Grace of God be in our hands  
To minister his healing

The Grace of God be in our hearts  
To make all know his love. Amen

## THE ORDER OF THE COVENANT SERVICE OR SPECIAL OCCASIONS

### ORDER OF RURAL LIFE SUNDAY I

by James William Sells

#### PRELUDE OR PROCESSIONAL CALL TO WORSHIP

*The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof  
The world, and they that dwell therein.*

#### HYMN

#### THE APOSTLES' CREED

#### MORNING PRAYER

#### ANTHEM

*To be sung by a children's choir*

#### RESPONSIVE READING

#### GLORIA PATRI

#### SCRIPTURE LESSON

**I Corinthians 3:1-11**

#### OFFERING

#### HYMN

*"We Plow the Fields, and Scatter"*

#### SERMON

*"The Wonder of Partnership"*

Text: For we are laborers together with God; ye are God's husbandry. (I Corinthians 3:9) A marginal reading of this text says, "For we are laborers together with God; ye are God's tillage."

#### THE ACT OF RECOGNITION

Minister: As we enter into this Act of Recognition, let us meditate on the wonder of our partnership with God. We will now consider the gifts of rural life which God has so graciously allowed us to share

with him. All of these gifts are revelations of his glory and were given to us to be used for the good of all mankind and to the glory of God.

#### **The Gift of Bread:**

As the minister completes this introduction to the Act of Recognition, a young man — dressed in the well-worn overalls of a hard-working farmer — walks to the front of the congregation, faces them, and speaks.

In this hand I hold the seed of wheat, which when planted and harvested makes possible a loaf of rich brown bread. *(He lifts the hand with the wheat, then the other with the loaf of bread.)* The gift of bread is God's plan for the building of the bodies of men and is a source of strength for the labor of the world. Without this gift of food, mankind would soon starve and the plan of God for the welfare of his children would come to nothing. We become partners with God as we raise food for man and beast, to care for the physical needs of the children of God. God first planted a garden and gave it to man to cultivate. It is always our privilege to continue to care for the gardens of God and in them help him grow food and fiber to feed and clothe the children of his creation.

#### **The Gift of Babies:**

As the farmer finishes speaking, a young matron with a baby in her arms and a small child by her side takes her place at the side of the farmer and speaks.

God gives babies to the families of men in order to continue his creative act and maintain life upon the face of the earth. God first created man and woman, and they were incomplete by themselves. Then, he gave unto them the first child. Thus, the family was established. The greatest gift that ever comes into a home is the gift of a child to become a member of the family and enter the partnership with God. The greatest blessing farm families give to the people of the world is the gift of strong youth, well-trained and willing to help bear the strain of leadership and take their places as partners in the fields of the world.

#### **The Gift of Brains:**

After the young mother has spoken, a well-dressed, mature man takes his place by the side of the farmer and the young mother, and speaks.

I hold in my hand these books. *(He lifts several books before the people.)* These books, including the greatest of all books, the Bible, represent some of the thinking of the best brains the world has ever known. The wisest and richest thinking of all time has come from the brains of men who have lived in the open, those who have trod the earthy fields of life and received their inspiration from the handiwork of God. God has given bread to feed the babies of the world, and he has given to the children of men brains to think, to contemplate, to worship, to appreciate, and to help him bring to pass his plans for his creation. God said, "Let us make man in our image," and that which he then created was a man who could think the thoughts of God after him.

#### **The Gift of Beauty:**

Now there comes a young woman, dressed in long white flowing robes and carrying an armful of spring flowers. As she takes her place by the other three, she speaks.

When God gave bread and babies and brains to the world, he placed them in the midst of his creation, and it was a place of beauty. When we learn to appreciate the beauty of this world — the dazzling dawn of a new day, the warm-colored sunset of a day well-spent, the glory of the stars at night, the thrilling green of a weeping willow in first spring, and the quiet peace at the heart of a red rose — we soon look about and say, "What a glorious world the Lord hath given to mankind." then, we remind ourselves of the Scripture which says, "Let the beauty of God be upon us," and we know the most beautiful sight in the world is the sight of a long life spent in companionship with God. There is wonder and awe in the partnership we share with God in the beauty of his world.

#### **The Gift of Brotherhood:**

To stand by these, there now comes a young man holding in his hand a world map, an atlas, or a large globe with the map of the world on it. He speaks.

These are the gifts of rural life: bread, babies, brains, beauty, and brotherhood. For man was not made to live in solitary places; he was made to live with other men. And God made men of all races. The first lesson the followers of Jesus learned was that in the sight of God there was neither Jew nor gentile, Greek nor barbarian, but all men were of one blood and children of one Father. Today we are tied together with all the peoples of the world in one community. The price the farmer gets for the food he produces may be influenced by the yield in other countries. So our future becomes intimately bound with the future of all mankind everywhere. We must learn to live like brothers with all men, or we will destroy ourselves even as one of the first brothers was destroyed by enmity, fear, and hatred. The great gift of rural life is that men must learn to live as brothers and that all men everywhere are children of one Father.

The Minister: Here are living symbols of the wonder of partnership with God. These gifts of rural life have been given to us by God - himself in the effort to teach us that we are co-laborers with him in the building of the Kingdom of God, in the here and now as well as in the hereafter to come.

The Congregation: *(Stands and prays together)*

FOR THE GREAT GIFTS OF THY LOVE, WE GIVE THEE THANKS, OUR FATHER, AND WE HEREBY ACCEPT THE PRIVILEGE THAT IS OURS. WE NOW ENTER INTO PARTNERSHIP WITH THEE IN THE BUILDING OF A BETTER WORLD WHERE ALL MANKIND MAY LIVE IN PEACE AND PLENTY. CONTINUE TO BLESS US WITH THY PRESENCE AND TEACH US THY WAY THAT WE MAY NOT DEPART THEREFROM; WE ASK IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD. AMEN.

#### **HYMN**

#### **BENEDICTION**

#### **POSTLUDE**

### **OCCASIONAL SERVICES**

## **ORDER OF RURAL LIFE SUNDAY II**

#### **PRELUDE OR PROCESSIONAL**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof;  
The world, and they that dwell therein.

#### **HYMN OF CREATION OR PRAISE**

#### **ADDRESS**

A leader may introduce the reason for celebration, using words, pictures, or other symbols.

#### **THE APOSTLES' CREED**

#### **MORNING PRAYER**

**ANTHEM** *(To be sung by a children's group or choir.)*

#### **RESPONSIVE READING**

#### **GLORIA PATRI**

#### **SCRIPTURE LESSON**

***I Corinthians 3:1-11***

#### **HYMN/SERMON/MEDUATION**

Text: For we are laborers together with God; ye are God's husbandry. II Corinthians 3:9) A marginal reading of this text says, "For we are laborers together with God; ye are God's tillage."

## OFFERING

### THE ACT OF RECOGNITION

Minister: As we enter into this Act of Recognition, let us meditate on the wonder of our partnership with God. We will now consider the gifts of rural life which God has so graciously allowed us to share with him. All of these gifts are revelations of his glory and were given to us to be used for the good of all mankind and to the glory of God.

#### **The Gift of Bread:**

As the minister completes this introduction to the Act of Recognition, a young man — dressed in the well-worn over-alls of a hard-working farmer — walks to the front of the congregation, faces them, and speaks.

In this hand I hold the seed of wheat, which when planted and harvested makes possible a loaf of rich brown bread. (He lifts the hand with the wheat, and the other with the loaf of bread.) The gift of bread is God's plan for the building of the bodies of men and is a source of strength for the labor of the world. Without this gift of food, mankind would soon starve and the plan of God for the welfare of his children would come to nothing. We become partners with God as we raise food for man and beast, to care for the physical needs of the children of God. God first planted a garden and gave it to man to cultivate. It is always our privilege to continue to care for the gardens of God and in them help him grow food and fiber to feed and clothe the children of his creation.

#### **The Gift of Babies:**

As the farmer finishes speaking, a young matron with a baby in her arms and a small child by her side takes her place at the side of the farmer and speaks.

God gives babies to the families of men in order to continue his creative act and maintain life upon the face of the earth. God first created man and woman, and they were incomplete by themselves. Then, he gave unto them the first child. Thus, the family was established. The greatest gift that ever comes into a home is the gift of a child to become a member of the family and enter the partnership with God. The greatest blessing farm families give to the people of the world is the gift of strong youth, well-trained and willing to help bear the strain of leadership and take their places as partners in the fields of the world.

#### **The Gift of Brains:**

After the young mother has spoken, a well-dressed, mature man takes his place by the side of the farmer and the young mother, and speaks.

I hold in my hand these books. (*He lifts several books before the people.*) These books, including the greatest of all books, the Bible, represent some of the thinking of the best brains the world has ever known. The wisest and richest thinking of all time has come from the brains of men who have lived in the open, those who have trod the earthy fields of life and received their inspiration from the handiwork of God. God has given bread to feed the babies of the world, and he has given to the children of men brains to think, to contemplate, to worship, to appreciate, and to help him bring to pass his plans for his creation. God said, "Let us make man in our image," and that which he then created was a man who could think the thoughts of God after him.

#### **The Gift of Beauty:**

Now there comes a young woman, dressed in long white flowing robes and carrying an armful of spring flowers. As she takes her place by the other three, she speaks.

When God gave bread and babies and brains to the world, he placed them in the midst of his creation, and it was a place of beauty. When we learn to appreciate the beauty of this world — the dazzling dawn of a new day, the warm-colored sunset of a day well-spent, the glory of the stars at night, the thrilling green of a weeping willow in first spring, and the quiet peace at the heart of a red rose — we soon look about and say, "What a glorious world the Lord hath given to mankind." then, we remind ourselves of the Scripture which says, "Let the beauty of God be upon us," and we know the most beautiful sight in the world is the sight of a

long life spend in companionship with God. There is wonder and awe in the partnership we share with God in the beauty of his world.

**The Gift of Community:**

To stand by these, there now comes a young man holding in his hand a world map, an atlas, or a large globe with the map of the world on it. He speaks.

These are the gifts of rural life: bread, babies, brains, beauty, and brotherhood. For man was not made to live in solitary places; he was made to live with other men. And God made men of all races. The first lesson the followers of Jesus learned was that in the sight of God there was neither Jew nor gentile, Greek nor barbarian, but all men were of one blood and children of one Father. Today we are tied together with all the peoples of the world in one community. The price the farmer gets for the food he produces may be influenced by the yield in other countries. So our future becomes intimately bound with the future of all mankind everywhere. We must learn to live like brothers with all men, or we will destroy ourselves even as one of the first brothers was destroyed by enmity, fear, and hatred. The great gift of rural life is that men must learn to live as brothers and that all men everywhere are children of one Father.

The Minister: Here are living symbols of the wonder of partnership with God. These gifts of rural life have been given to us by God himself in the effort to teach us that we are co-laborers with him in the building of the Kingdom of God, in the here and now as well as in the hereafter to come.

The Congregation: *Those that are able in the congregation may stand and pray together.*

FOR THE GREAT GIFTS OF THY LOVE, WE GIVE THEE THANKS, OUR FATHER, AND WE HEREBY ACCEPT THE PRIVILEGE THAT IS OURS. WE NOW ENTER INTO PARTNERSHIP WITH THEE IN THE BUILDING OF A BETTER WORLD WHERE ALL MANKIND MAY LIVE IN PEACE AND PLENTY. CONTINUE TO BLESS US WITH THY PRESENCE AND TEACH US THY WAY THAT WE MAY NOT DEPART THEREFROM; WE ASK IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, OUR LORD. AMEN.

**HYMN**

**BENEDICTION**

**POSTLUDE**

— Edward Krusen Ziegler

## **LITURGY FOR NATIONAL THANKSGIVING**

**GATHERING**

Suitable choral or instrumental music may be offered as the people gather. Congregational singing of hymns of thanksgiving may provide an alternative in some circumstances. If this is ecumenical gathering, hymns or songs from the various traditions represented may be sung.

**GREETING**

Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
for you judge the peoples with equity  
and guide all the nations upon the earth.

Let all the peoples praise you, O God;  
Let all the peoples praise you.

The earth has brought forth its increase;  
may God, our own God, bless us.

Let all the peoples praise you, O God;  
Let all the peoples praise you.

## HYMN

*"Now Thank We All Our God" and "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" are especially appropriate as an entrance hymn or processional. Other appropriate hymns for this day include:*

"All People That on Earth Do Dwell"  
"Come, Ye Thankful People, Come"  
"For All the Blessing of the Year"  
"For the Beauty of the Earth"  
"From All That Dwell Below the Skies"  
"God, Whose Firm Is All Creation"  
"How Great Thou Art"  
"Let Us With A Gladsome Mind"  
"Many and Great, O God"  
"O God, Thou Giver of All Good"  
"O Lord of Heaven and Earth and Sea"  
"Thanks To God Whose Word Was Spoken"  
"To Bless The Earth, God Sendeth"  
"We Plow The Fields"  
"We, Thy People, Praise Thee"  
"When All Thy Mercies, O My God"

The greeting may follow the hymn if there is a processional. Appropriate signs of harvest, cross, and Bible may be carried in procession.

## OPENING PRAYER

Lord our God, love began with you  
and has filled our cup to overflowing.  
In the abundance of our countless gifts, give us your grace to fill others lives with love,  
that we may more nearly be worthy of all you have given us.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus the Lord.  
Amen.

or

Holy and gracious God, we give you thanks for the fruits of the earth in their season,  
and for the labors of those who harvest them.  
Make us, we pray, faithful stewards of your great bounty, in the provision for our necessities,  
and the relief of all who are in need, to the glory of your name; through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
Amen.

or, if a prayer of confession is desired, the minister may address the people:

Dear friends in Christ, aware of God's providence and grace, let us bow in silence before God to confess our sins and receive forgiveness.

A moment of silence. Most merciful God,

We confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We pray you: in your mercy forgive what we have been, amend what we are, direct what we shall be;  
that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, giving thanks in all circumstances  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Minister to people* Friends, hear the good news: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

*People to Minister:* IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, YOU ARE FORGIVEN!

*People and minister: GLORY TO GOD. AMEN.*

## **ACT OF PRAISE**

Here may be sung the "Gloria in Excelsis", the "Jubilate Deo", or the "Te Deum". A choral setting of these or similar canticles may be sung by the choir.

### **First Lesson**

Deuteronomy 8:7-18	(Year A: 1987, 1990, 1993)
Joel 2:21-27	(Year B: 1988, 1991, 1994)
Deuteronomy 26:1-11	(Year C: 1989, 1992, 1995)

### **Psalm**

Psalm 65	(Year A: 1987, 1990, 1993)
Psalm 126	(Year B: 1988, 1991, 1994)
Psalm 100	(Year C: 1989, 1992, 1995)

### **Second Lesson**

II Corinthians 9:6-15	(Year A: 1987, 1990, 1993)
I Timothy 2:1-7	(Year B: 1988, 1991, 1994)
Philippians 4:4-9	(Year C: 1989, 1992, 1995)

### **Alleluia (Hymn or Anthem)**

### **Gospel**

Luke 17:11-19	(Year A: 1987, 1990, 1993)
Matthew 6:25-33	(Year B: 1988, 1991, 1994)
.John 6:25-35	(Year C: 1989, 1992, 1995)

## **SERMON**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE OR PASTORAL PRAYER**

If a special offering of food gifts is to be brought by the people in a procession or by representatives, these prayers or the litany of thanks-giving may follow the Offering. If the people make their own petitions, the common response to each may be: Most gracious God, hear our prayer. Or, the following litany of thanksgiving may be prayed:

*Let us give thanks to our God our Creator for all gifts so freely bestowed upon us:*

*A brief silence.*

*For the beauty and wonder of ovation, in earth and sky and sea,*

**WE THANK YOU, LORD.**

*For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends,*

**WE THANK YOU LORD.**

*For minds to think, and hearts to love, and hands to serve,*

**WE THANK YOU LORD.**

*For health and strength to work, and leisure to rest and play,*

**WE THANK YOU LORD.**

*For the brave and courageous who are patient in suffering and faithful in adversity.*

**WE THANK YOU LORD.**



*For all valiant seekers after truth, liberty, justice, and peace,*

*WE THANK YOU LORD.*

*For the communion of saints, in all times and places,*

*WE THANK YOU LORD.*

*Above all,*

*let us give thanks for the great promises and mercies given, to us and to all the world in Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

*To Christ be praise and glory, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, now and Or ever. Amen.*

## **THE PEACE**

All may exchange signs of reconciliation and peace, silently, or with the traditional "The peace of the Lord be with you."

## **OFFERING**

When the offerings are presented, the following may be sung...

*"Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow"*

*"We Give Thee But Thine Own" (stanza 1)*

*Or the following hymn by Charles Wesley...*

*God, Son, and Holy Ghost, One in Three, and Three in One,*

*As by the celestial host, Let thy will on with be done:*

*Praise by all to thee be given, Gracious Lord of earth and heaven!*

*Take my soul and body's pone's, Take my memory, mind, and will,*

*All my goods, and all my hours, All I know, and all flee!,*

*All I think, and speak, and do: Take my heart, but make it new.*

*If Holy Communion is not celebrated,*

*the service concludes with a hymn and dismissal with blessing.*

*If Communion is not celebrated,*

*the table is prepared during the offering and the service continues as follows:*

## **GREAT THANKSGIVING**

*The Lord be with you.*

*AND ALSO WITH YOU*

*Lift up your hearts.*

*WE LIFT THEM TO THE LORD.*

*Let us give thanks to the Lord and praise.*

*IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE THANKS AND PRAISE.*

*It is right, and good and joyful thing,*

*always and everywhere to give thanks to you,*

*Holy God, Orator of heaven and earth.*

*By your appointment the seasons come and go.*

*You bring forth bread from the earth*

*and create the fruit of the vine.*

*You have made us in your image*

*and given its dominion over the*

*Earth has yielded its treasure,  
and from your hand we have received blessing on blessing.*

*And so with your people on earth  
and all the company of heaven,  
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:*

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.*

*Hossana in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.*

*Holy are you and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.  
Though Jesus Christ was rich, yet for our sake Christ became poor.  
When hungry and tempted,  
Jesus Christ refused to make bread of life for others.  
When the multitudes were hungry, Christ fed them.  
Jesus Christ broke bread with the outcast  
but drove the greedy out of the Temple.*

*By the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection  
you gave birth to your church,  
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,  
and made with us a new covenant by water and Spirit.*

*On the night in which Jesus Christ gave himself up for us  
Jesus took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,  
gave it to his disciples, and said:  
"Take, eat: this is my body which is given for you.  
Do this in remembrance of me."*

*When the supper was over Jesus Christ took the cup,  
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:  
"Drink for this, all of you:  
this is my blood of the new covenant poured out for you and for many  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."*

*And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,  
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice,  
in union with Christ's offering for us,  
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.*

*Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ come again.*

*Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, gathered here,  
and on these gifts of bread and wine.  
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,  
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.*

*By your Spirit make us one with Christ,  
one with each other, and one to the ministry to all the world,  
until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet*

*Through your Son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit in your holy church,  
all honor and glory is yours, Almighty God, now and for ever. Amen.*

## THE LORD'S PRAYER

## BREAKING THE BREAD

## COMMUNION

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

You have given yourself to us, Lord.

NOW WE GIVE OURSELVES TO OTHERS.

Your love has made us a new people.

AS A PEOPLE OF LOVE WE WILL SERVE YOU WITH JOY.

Your glory has filled our hearts.

HELP US TO GLORIFY YOU IN ALL THINGS. AMEN.

or

Eternal God, Heavenly One, you have graciously accepted us  
as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,  
and you have fed us with spiritual food in the sacrament of his body and blood.  
Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you  
with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord.  
Amen. BCP

### HYMN *Appropriate closing hymns include:*

"Now Thank We All Our God"

"Lord, Whose Love Through Humble Service"

"O God, Thou Giver of all Good"

### DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

*Go in peace to, love and serve the Lord.*

*THANKS BE TO GOD.*

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit  
be with you all, now and for ever. Amen.*

— *Handbook of Christian Year*

## LITURGY FOR SENDING OFF CHILDREN TO SCHOOL

There are many occasions in a family's life when the coming and going of the children or any member of the family may be an occasion for the church to acknowledge God's presence and action. Sending off to school, which may be far from home is one of these special occasions.

At the designated time in the service the minister shall call those who are about to be sent off. The candidates shall come forward together with their parents.

Friends, these children we have now in front are about to leave for their studies elsewhere. They are about to face a new environment in which new experiences await them. We know how it feels to be in a new world out-side our family. Both excitement and fears are there. Excitement to meet new people, new friends, and excitement to gain new knowledge and new experience are unfathomable. But fear also surrounds us. The fear of being away from the comfort and protection of home, the fear of a new authority in the person of teachers and school authorities

and the fear of unfriendly classmates and surroundings. We are calling them to give them our full support as a fellowship as these children leave to enter a new world, the world of school.

The minister shall request those that are able in the congregation to stand as he leads in prayer.

### **PRAYER**

Parents placing their hands on the shoulders or heads of their children.

God whom we call Creator, you are our Friend and especially the Protector of the our children. We come before You now, to offer the lives of these children who are about to enter school away from home. We dedicate to You their lives, as they come to face new experiences in life. May you take care of them as they face new people. May you lead them in the right path, protecting them from any influence that will bring destruction. As they come to learn new things, may You give them knowledge to know and choose what is right and good. Make them also as an example of Your love and concern to their teachers and schoolmates.

And may we as parents and families give them inspiration and encouragement. Keeping them always in our care, sustaining them in their quest for knowledge and helping their teachers in all possibility/responsibilities in nurturing them as they grow up. May the Church also forget not its role as a guiding light to these children. May it continue to sustain the spiritual needs of these children of yours. All this we pray in Your name. Amen.  
*The congregation may sit down.*

### **AFFIRMATION OF VOWS**

Minister *to the children*: Do you promise to read and study the Word of God in your own way even while away in school?

Children: I DO!

Minister: Do you promise to seek knowledge given in and outside the school particularly the church?

Children: I DO!

Minister: Do you promise to be friendly to your teachers, schoolmates and others whom you will meet?

Children: I DO!

Minister *to the parents*: Do you promise to hold these children continuously in your prayers and care, supporting them in all their needs?

Parents: WE DO!

Minister *to the congregation*: Do you promise to sustain these children in their search for knowledge and new understanding through prayers and communication?

Congregation: *standing* WE DO!

\* The candidates shall face the congregation with their parents at the back and the council members in both sides

### **THE BLESSING**

#### **THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP**

The council members shall extend the right hand of fellowship. If possible a token from the church shall be given to the children and after this the parents and children shall return to their seats.

## LITURGY OF THANKSGIVING FOR A NEW BABY

(This may be held in the hospital or at home. The Minister makes an appointment to conduct the service when the entire family is present. Worship center: perhaps, a rosebud and vase are brought by the Minister and left with the family.)

### OPENING WORDS

Minister: The Psalmist expresses the feelings we harbor with the gift of this new life. "Lo, (children) are a heritage from the Lord ... Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them!" (Psalm 127:3,4,5).

What a joyful privilege is yours. God has said, I'll lend you for a little while, a child of Mine, for you to love while he/she lives..." May your response be, "Dear Lord, for all the joy Your child shall bring, the risk of grief we'll run. We will shelter him/her with tenderness. We will love him/her while we may."

God has given you the privilege of parenthood. God has placed into your care and responsibility this helpless life. How mysterious is birth and life! What a blending and intertwining of life streams have occurred here! The directions this child shall take mentally, physically, socially, and spiritually will, to a large measure, be determined by you parents.

If your child could now take voice, (he/she) might say:

"I have come into your world about which I know nothing.

Why I come I know not;

How I came I know not...

You hold in your hand my destiny.

You determine, largely, whether I shall succeed or fail.

Give me, I pray you, those things that make for happiness.

Train me, I beg you, that I may be a blessing to the world."

### *Let us pray to God*

Divine source of life and spirit; we bow in thankfulness and awe before the mystery of this life. We bow in thankfulness for this new person, and for the privilege these two (name of new parents) have of being his/her parents. Give to them maturity of judgment, self-control, and responsibility that they may please You. Grant this child a sound spirit that he/she may become Christlike and bring honor to our Lord and the kingdom throughout his/her life. In Jesus Name. Amen.

Picture taken of Father, Mother and Baby; placed in a beautiful folder from church, to be given to the family, and an enrollment card for Baby or cradle roll in children's department. Get information while there. Congratulations offered by Minister, a blessing to all present, then departure.

—James L. Christensen, *New Ways to Worship*  
NJ Fleming H. Revell Co. 1973.

# LITURGY FOR GRADUATION FROM SCHOOL

## WORD OF PREPARATION

## PRELUDE/PROCESSIONAL

The minister and parents of graduates enter.

## CALL TO CELEBRATION

God is here — God is now!  
It is time for Celebration!  
It is time for exaltation!  
Let us praise God!  
Let us exalt God's name together!

## HYMN OF CELEBRATION

Entrance of the candidates for graduation and undergraduate students with honor.

**PRAYER** *One of the candidates ... her/his own prayer*

Introduction of honor students and pinning of ribbons — *by their parents/relatives*

Response: *A word or song fit to honor students celebrating their parents/families*

Introduction of the candidates for graduation — *pinning of ribbons on their parents*

## A HYMN OF THANKSGIVING OR PRAISE

## READING OF THE SCRIPTURE

**THE ANTHEM** *the choir/or the graduates*

## THE MESSAGE

## THE CALL TO OFFERING

Ushers and usherettes must be among the honor students or candidate/s for graduation.

## THE DOXOLOGY/CANTICLE OF PRAISE

As the offering is brought forward, the honorees and candidates shall come forward including their parents.

## THANKSGIVING PRAYER

The honor students and candidates for graduation shall kneel down while their parents place their hands on the head of their children.

### One of the graduates

Thank You God for guiding us Your children in our studies in all those years. Thank You for the knowledge we received both from You and from our teachers and from all others. May the knowledge we have gained be used for the good of our family, friends and community. May we forget not our responsibility towards You and our fellow-humans. Thank You above all for our parents who guided and supported us in all our needs. For our parents who worked hard and who sacrificed much, in order that we, their children may finish a higher education. Thank You God for their unbounded love and care. We also thank You for our teachers/professors who imparted their knowledge to us, though sometimes we were not always attentive and diligent enough to learn. Thank You Lord for their patience towards us. We also thank You for our classmates who both inspired and angered us, from whom we learned some spices in life. We thank You for friends who were there with us through thick and thin. We also remember those people in our fellowship who have been there showing their concern about our progress in our studies, those who have been reminding us not only of our school responsibilities but also of the church and family obligations. Above all we thank You for everything You have done to and for us from the very start of our schooling until now. In the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

## THE HYMN OF DEDICATION

The parents and their graduating children remain in front, facing the Congregation as the Hymn of Dedication is being sing.

## THE PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We come now to dedicate **our** lives to You O Lord especially the lives of these children before You. They are now to encounter new experiences and challenges in their lives; as some of them are about to enter college and some are about to find jobs. In whatever plans and decisions they are to make, continue to guide and inspire them as they strive hard to reach Your goal for them in life. Grant them Your love and peace. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

## THE BENEDICTION THE RESPONSE

## THE RECESSIONAL

The Honor students, the candidates for graduates and the parents will march outside, the right of fellowship will continue while the music goes on.

# LITURGY FOR FIRST EMPLOYMENT

## THE GATHERING

A Moment of Meditation:

*If I have the gift of health, No effort I must shirk;  
I must give it to God, In good and honest work.*

— Strong—

Songs for Gathering (*Short choruses*)

Greetings/Acknowledgement of those present

## THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF GOD'S PRESENCE

**Call to Celebration:**

Leader: God is here. God is in our midst  
Now is the time for us to come alive.  
Now is the time for us to celebrate.  
Who we are, whose we are, where we came from and where we are going.

All: LET US PRAISE GOD.

**Song of Praise and Adoration**

## THE WORD

**Reading of Scriptures:** Micah 6:6-8

## MESSAGE/MEDITATION ON THE WORD

Well-wishes/Greetings to the person/s involved by the family/relative/ friends

## RESPONSE BY THE PERSON/S INVOLVED

Prayer of Thanksgiving for the First Employment of the Person/s involved (Unison)

We greatly thank You, O God, for granting the gift of being employed. Help to commit himself/herself to participate responsibly in her/his field(s) of work through good and honest labor. Guide her/him to live by Your Words "to lay up for herself/himself treasures in heaven" and not to look forward to receiving the

rewards of the world by engaging ungodly practices. Help her/him/them though, not only as a blessing for her/his/their to count alone but help also to share this blessing to others. Lead us on to work with our colleagues harmoniously in the name of Jesus. Amen.

#### **THE CELEBRATION OF THE MEAL**

Songs/music may accompany the meal.

#### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE FOOD AND THE FELLOWSHIP**

#### **THE SHARING OF THE FOOD**

#### **SONG OF COMMITMENT**

#### **BENEDICTION**

The people may show their approval and support by applause or other means.

### **LITURGY FOR RETIREMENT OF EMPLOYEES I**

#### **THE GATHERING**

- Songs to gather (if possible by the children/grandchildren/relatives of the retiree).
- Greetings/Acknowledgment (from his wife/her husband or one among the children/grandchildren/relative).

#### **ACKNOWLEDGING GOD'S PRESENCE**

- Call to celebration
- Song of adoration
- Prayer for the Gathering (One of the Church Elders

#### **THE WORD**

- Reading of the Scriptures
- A word of acknowledgment from a (Company or Institution Head, Co-employee or a subordinate)
- A song (from among family, friends or co-workers)
- A word from the Retiree/s
- Well wishes to the Retiree/s

#### **PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

We give You thanks, Oh Lord our Sustainer of life, for all the years that You have given to our friend(s) who is/are now about to retire from her/his job. Thank you for being with her/him in all the days as she/he served You and Your people. Thank you also for the health that sustained them. May we who are still working/employed learn from her/ his/their dedication in work, their perseverance and zealousness. As she/he/they is about to enter a new phase in life we continue to offer You her/his life for Your continued blessing and guiding. And in whatever plans she/he is about to embark, may Your support and good life be upon her/him in Jesus name we pray. Amen.

#### **THE HYMN OF DEDICATION**

#### **THE BLESSING**

#### **THE SHARING OF MEAL**



## A BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY SERVICE

### OPENING MUSIC

This may be rendered by any member of the family on any musical instrument.

### WORDS OF GREETINGS

These may be words of welcome by a member of the host family.

### CALL TO CELEBRATION

Leader: God is here. God is in our midst. Now is the time for us to come alive. Now is the time for us to celebrate. Who we are, whose we are, where we came from and where we are going.

All: LET US PRAISE GOD.

### HYMN OR SONG OF PRAISE AND ADORATION *(Community standing)*

### AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH *(by all, standing)*

## ORDER I OF SERVICE FOR THE LAYING OF THE CORNERSTONE OF A CHURCH

The minister and other leaders in the rite shall surround the corner where the first stone is to be laid.

### SCRIPTURE SENTENCES

"... A sensible man ... built his house on rock. And the rain fell, and the rivers rose, and the winds blew, and beat about that house, and it did not go down, for its foundations were on rock." (Matt. 7:24b-25)

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." (Psalm 127:1)

"... each one must be careful how he builds. For God has already placed Jesus Christ as the one and only foundation, and no other foundation can be laid. Some will use gold, or silver, or precious stones in building upon the foundations; others will use wood, or grass, or straw. And the quality of each man's work will be seen when the Day of Christ exposes it. For that day's fire will reveal every man's work: the fire will test it and show its real quality." Cor. 3:10b-13)

*(For a Church Building)*

The Lord has chosen you to build a house for the sanctuary; be strong and do it. Fear not, be not dismayed: for the Lord ... is with you."

He will not fail you or forsake you, until all the work for the service of the house of the Lord is finished." (I Chron. 28:10b, 20)

### PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Almighty God, who has made man in your image and has given him creativity and skill, we ask that you be present here and now as we dedicate the labors of man in this building to your glory and to the service of mankind. May this act be a reminder to us that unless you are with us in all that we do and say it will not be worth anything. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

or

Almighty God, our Father, who has so graciously given to man the gift of imagination of creativity, we bless you that today we shall be enabled to begin the work of another of man's creations. Grant that through this laying of the cornerstone, we shall be aware of the work of the Holy Spirit in and through us. We ask that this

work which we begin in your name may be completed and used to the praise and glory of your Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

**HYMN OF PRAISE** *(Community standing)*

**WORDS OF INTENTION OR PURPOSE** *(by the owner)*

Dear friends, we are gathered here today to lay the cornerstone of a new (name of building) for (purpose of building) Therefore let us humbly seek his blessing on this our undertaking.

**PRAYER OF SUPPLICATION**

Almighty God, who has promised **to** be wherever two or three are gathered in your name, be present now as we offer to you the foundation which we are about to lay for this building. Bless our words and actions that they may give you glory and praise. Amen.

**THE LAYING OF THE CORNERSTONE**

The minister shall stand by the corner where the stone is to be laid and shall invite the participants to place in the box whatever documents have been prepared for preservation in the cornerstone. Or else, in the absence of this, he will invite them to pour spadeful of earth, cement or gravel and stones in the hole for cementing. As they do this, a special Choral acclamation may be sung or he/she may say:

Behold, I am laying in Zion for a foundation of a stone, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation. (Isaiah 28:16)

and/or

Blessed art thou, O Lord, God of Israel, our father forever and ever. Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the preeminence and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and on the earth is yours; yours is the dominion, O Lord, and you are exalted as the supreme head. Riches and honor come from you, since you rule over all; in your hand are power and might, and it lies in your hand to make all great and might, and it lies in your hand to make all great and strong. Now therefore our God we thank you and praise your glorious name. (I Chron. 29:10-14)

or

*(For a Church Building)*

O Lord our God, all these materials that we have prepared to build thee a house for your holy name came from your hand and are all your own. O Lord, the God of Abraham, (Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, keep this forever as the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of your people, and direct their hearts toward you...." (I Chron. 29:16-18)

**THE ACT OF CONSECRATION** *(Community Standing)*

*The minister, laying his hand upon the stone or the foundation, shall say:*

Let us pray: Almighty God, we bless you, we praise you, for now the foundation of this house is laid! Accept the act by which we lay this cornerstone. Bless those whose offerings enabled us to build this building (or house of worship). Graciously guard and direct those who labor in erecting it, shielding them from accident and peril. May the walls of this building rise in security and in beauty; and may the hearts of these your people be fitly joined together in their rejoicing as they rejoice in the Lordship of Jesus Christ, our chief cornerstone. Amen.

**THE DOXOLOGY OR A BRIEF SONG OF PRAISE** *(Community Standing)*

O Lord God, when you give to your servants to endeavor any great undertaking, grant us also to know that it is not the beginning, but the continuing of the same unto the end, until it is thoroughly and satisfactorily finished, which yields the true glory; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

or

Eternal God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, bless and confirm that which we have now done in your name. Let your favor be upon us this day and establish the work of our hands. Give us grace that in this task to which we have set our hands we may neither flinch nor waver, but be strong to persevere, until under your blessing we bring it to a right end. Bless all those who have given generously and freely of their substance for this building. Help all those who labor with their hands upon this building; save them from all hurt and give them joy and satisfaction in their work. We pray that when this building (house) stands complete in strength and beauty, your glory may ever dwell within it. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

#### **HYMN OF THANKSGIVING OR DEDICATION**

#### **BENEDICTION**

Minister: And now, may God's glory dwell in this house forever, that all who dwell (or work) in this place may be found steadfast in faith and honest in work.

And may God's love, joy and peace be with you all, now and always. Amen.

#### **SONG AFFIRMATION**

By member/s of the family or by the whole community.

#### **WORD OF GOD IN SCRIPTURE**

#### **A WITNESS TO THE WORD** (*Message*)

#### **SONG OF THANKSGIVING** (*Community Standing*)

#### **TRIBUTE TO THE CELEBRANT**

This tribute may be spoken by members of the family, by a close friend, or by both family and friends. They are brief statements of thanksgiving to God.

#### **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Minister: O God, our loving Father, we thank you that you have given to (name of celebrant) one more year of growth in wisdom, in stature, and in favor with God and man. We thank you for this glad occasion when family and friends have come together to wish him/ her well.

We thank you for all that has happened in the past year — the times of joy as well as of sorrow when you were very near; the times of success which will be remembered with happy satisfaction, and the times of failure which reminded him/her how much we/depend upon you.

You have given him/her your Word, the life of your Son and the loving companionship of family and friends. Thank you for your enabling Spirit shining all along the way.

Help \_\_\_\_\_ in the days that lie ahead to make this the best year yet and in it to bring credit to himself, happiness to his loved ones and glory to you. We, who love him/her, O God commit him/ her to your love and care graciously abide with him all the days in the years ahead. Amen.

*Here the celebrant may offer a short simple prayer of thanksgiving and dedication.*

All: THE LORD'S PRAYER

#### **HYMN OF FELLOWSHIP OR A BIRTHDAY SONG** (*Community Standing*)

#### **BLESSING OF FOOD AND PEOPLE**

## THE FELLOWSHIP MEAL BIRTHDAY ANNIVERSARY SERVICE (IN THE HOME)

All the people having gathered in the hall prepared for the occasion, the Pastor, standing behind the table on which are the Birthday candles, flowers, and an open Bible, shall give this call to Praise or a similar one.

### CALL TO PRAISE

"It is a good thing to give thanks to the Lord and to sing praises to Thy name, O most High."

### HYMN OF PRAISE

"There is Sunshine in my Soul Today" or  
"Love Divine All Love Excelling"

### PRAYER

### SCRIPTURE LESSON

### SPECIAL SONG

By a choir or a selected singer

### BIRTHDAY MESSAGE

Here the Pastor shall bring a brief but well prepared sermon. Birthday Services can be bridges of the Gospel to people who do not ever come to the Church to listen to God's word. It is urged, therefore, that much preparation shall be made for the message.

### THE ACT OF DEDICATION

While the Hymn "O Jesus I Have Promised" or another like it, is being sung, the birthday celebrant shall come to the table in front of the Pastor and light the candles representing his/her years. When the candles are all lighted, the congregation shall rise to sing one stanza of "Take My Life and Let Us Be", "Have Thine Own Way" or a similar hymn. Then, as the congregation is standing, the Pastor will offer the Prayer of Dedication. After the Prayer, some appropriate short choruses shall be sung as the celebrant faces the group of well-wishers.

### SHORT CHORUSES

"Happy Birthday to You"  
"Glad Birthday We Wish You"  
"Make Him/Her a Blessing"

### THE BENEDICTION

"Now unto Him who is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His Glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forevermore. Amen."

## OPENING AND CLOSING LITURGY FOR MEETINGS

### THE COMMUNITY GATHERS

#### MUSIC FOR GATHERING

#### EARTH SOUNDS

#### WORDS OF PREPARATION

##### Silent Meditation as People Gather

"... questions about our involvement in the corporate life of human society — business, politics, entertainment, education — are intimately related to theological concerns. The first article of the Apostles'

Creed, where we confess that God is 'Maker of heaven and earth . . . shows that we believe the world and all that is in it are not products of chance, but the result of the creative activity of God." *Richard J. Mouw*

#### **SYMBOLS ARE BROUGHT TO THE WORSHIP CENTER**

Christ Candle  
7 big candles for 7 jurisdictions  
a flute for breath and music  
a pot of earth — for space for everyone in the world  
a pitcher of water — for source of life  
a pot of plant — for life itself  
a vase of flowers (5 roses) for 5 decades  
incense — the scent of holiness and thanksgiving  
Bible — Word of God  
Cross — God's Love  
Indigenous crafts

**Introit** (to be chanted)

St. AGNES

Come Holy Spirit, heavenly dove With all Thy quickening powers; Kindle a flame of sacred love In these cold hearts of ours

#### **LIGHTING OF CHRIST CANDLE**

#### **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE GATHERED COMMUNITY**

(Roll Call/Introduction of Guests)

#### **THE DECLARATION OF THE FORMAL OPENING OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL MEETING**

Chairperson

#### **THE COMMUNITY PRAISES GOD**

#### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Liturgist: "... you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of the One Who called you out of darkness into the everlasting light.

People: Once we were no people, but now we are God's people; **once** we had not received mercy, but now we have received mercy."

Liturgist: "... I beseech you ... to abstain from the passions of the flesh that wage war against your soul ... that all may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.

People: Let us be subject for the Saviour's sake to every human institution, whether it be the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent to punish those who wrong and to praise those who do right.

All: FOR IT IS GOD'S WILL THAT BY DOING RIGHT WE SHOULD PUT TO SILENCE THE IGNORANCE OF FOOLISH PEOPLE; BUT LIVE AS SERVANTS OF GOD HONORING ALL, LOVING ALL, FEARING GOD. AMEN.

#### **\*HYMN OF PRAISE AND ADORATION**

"Ating Purihin Ang Dios" PAJARO

*AtIng purihin, ating purihin ang Dios na dakila,  
Pagsamba ay ialay umawit ang madla;  
Ang pangalan, ang pangalan N'yci ay laging ibandila,  
Purihin sa langit, Purihin sa lupa.*

*Ang pagpapala, ang pagpapala ng Dios ay hanapin,  
Maglingkod na palagi't Ang aral N'ya'y sundin;*

*Ang pag-ibig, ang pag-ibig N'ya ay laging siyang dalhin,  
Biyaya ng buhay ay ating kakamtin.*

*Buong tiwala, buong tiwalang buhay ay ialay,  
Ang lahat ay ilagak Sa Kanyang kandungan;  
May biyaya, may biyaya S'yang sa ati'y iaalay,  
Purihin S'yang lagi, Purihin kailanman. Amen.*

### **THE COMMUNITY CONFESSES ITS SIN**

#### **A RECALL OF UCCP HISTORICAL EVENTS** (*highlighting 'successes' and 'failures'*)

#### **NATURE OF THE GATHERING**

#### **CALL TO PENITENCE** (*Liturgist*)

*God, we are not worthy to have You come under our roof:  
But only say the word, and your servants will be healed.  
Let us confess our sins.*

#### **UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

O everlasting God, You sent Your Son to show us how to live lives that are lived in You. Grant that we may follow Your Son in faithfulness.

Accept our petitions for the reformation and transformation of Your Church in this day and age.

Make Your Church one and inclusive of all Your children; child, youth, women and men coming from all walks of life and still embracing all of creation.

Save us who believe in You and who worship You, from whatever is wrong and untrue in our faith, and unjust in our structures and minis-tries while following You.

Cleanse each one of us, and our Church from all malice, dishonesty and greed **and** all that is sinful. Lift us up from shame, save us from fear and weakness of body and will, that we may shine as lights in the world like the City set on a hill. So that in the midst of confusion of this world, we become strong in you and in our faithfulness to Your will always. In the Name of Jesus Christ our Example and Saviour. Amen.

#### **Silent Awaiting for God's Forgiveness**

**All sing** (at an appropriate time)

Tune: **"Come Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove ST. AGNES**

O hope of every contrite heart, O joy of all the meek,  
To those who fall, how kind Thou art!  
How good to those who seek! Amen.

*(Each one says to her/his neighbor led by the minister)*

"As the wind moves and dances around the earth,  
receive the gracious gift of the Spirit of God's forgiving love.  
Amen."

**All sing joyfully**

"Halle, halle, halle - lujah! (3x) KARIBIK  
Hallelujah, Hallelujah!"

### **THE COMMUNITY CONSOLIDATES ITSELF**

#### **SHARING OF CONCERNS, NEWS AND PRESENTATION OF THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING**

#### **COMMUNITY PRAYER** (*led by the General Secretary*)

**Response:** Community Supplication (sung) HALL

Take Thou ourselves, O God, heart, mind and will;  
Through our surrendered souls Thy plans fulfill.  
We yield ourselves to Thee — time, talents, all;  
We hear, and henceforth heed, Thy Sovereign call. Amen.

#### **THE COMMUNITY LISTENS TO GOD'S WORD PROCLAIMED**

##### **READING FROM THE HOLY SCRIPTURES**

##### **THE WORD OF GOD SANG**

##### **THE WORD OF GOD INTERPRETED**

#### **THE COMMUNITY RESPONDS TO GOD'S WORD**

##### **CALL TO COMMITMENT**

##### **COMMUNITY RESPONSE IN PRAYER AND WORDS OF COMMITMENT**

(A part of a map is given to each of representatives of each jurisdiction. Every participant will write what she/he can contribute to the meeting then sign her/his name. After writing individual commitment, the bishops bring the pieces and join them together.) While the hymn of consecration is sung, representatives from Conferences place their symbols on the map where their Conferences are located.

##### **\*HYMN OF CONSECRATION (All)**

"We Would Be building" FINLANDIA

We would be building; temples still undone  
O'er crumbling walls their crosses scarcely lift;  
Waiting till love can raise the broken stone,  
And hearts creative bridge the human rift;  
We would be building; Master, let Thy plan  
Reveal the life that God would give to man.

Teach us to build; upon the solid rock  
We set the dream that hardens into deed,  
Ribbed with the steel that time and change doth mock  
The unfailing purpose of our noblest creed;  
Teach us to build; O Master, lend us sight.  
To see the towers gleaming in the light.

O keep us building, Master; may our hands  
Ne'er falter when the dream is in our hearts,  
When to our ears there come divine commands  
And all the pride of sinful will departs;  
We build with Thee; O grant enduring worth  
Until the Heavenly Kingdom comes on earth. Amen.

##### **\*PRAYER OF COMMITMENT (All)**

O Everlasting God, the Sovereign of our Church: You speak to us today as yesterday, and will speak tomorrow as today, telling us that we are Yours and through Your great goodness, have drawn us to You.

We hear You, but grant that we may hear You aright! We believe You, but help our unbelief. We want to obey You, but make You an end of all that is much too soft and much too hard. Help us to truly obey You and trust You fully and gladly. Grant that we may wholeheartedly leave behind what must remain behind, and let us look forward and go forward in lively confidence.

We lift our hearts to You: the Creator, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen and Amen!

##### **\*JAMAICAN AMEN:**

A-amen, A-amen, A-amen, Amen, Amen!

#### **THE COMMUNITY PROCEEDS TO THE BUSINESS MEETING**

## **CLOSING CELEBRATION**

### **THE ACT OF PRAISE AND THANKSGIVING**

Bell Sounds Earth Sounds

### **THE SILENT MEDITATION**

The ministry of peacemaking is an imperative of the faith we profess. Our Statement of Faith calls us "to participate in the establishment of a meaningful and just social order." Hence, the peace we seek should result from our active participation in building structures that promote human development and uphold human dignity.

As a Church, we should actively work for understanding, reconciliation and unity. We should join hands with peoples of the world in the common quest for peace based on justice.

Above all, we should follow Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

### **CALL TO WORSHIP**

Liturgist 1: Where ignorance, self-love and insensitivity have fractured life in community.

People: Give your wisdom, O God of love.

Liturgist 2: Where injustice and oppression have broken the spirit of peoples,

People: Give your power, O God, who frees.

Liturgist 3: Where hunger and poverty, illness and death have made life an unbearable burden.

People: Give your mercy, O God of Grace.

Liturgist 1, 2, 3: Where suspicion and hatred, conflicts and war have challenged your goodness.

People: Give your love, O God of peace.

Unison: Eternal God, open the eyes of the nations and peoples, so that they may walk in the light of love, remove the ignorance and stubbornness of nations and peoples, so that they may drink from the fountains of your wisdom and goodness. (Canberra Worship Book 1995)

### **INVOCATION**

God, the Holy Spirit, come to us and among us; Come as the wind, and cleanse us; Come as the fire, and burn us; Come as the rain, and re-fresh; Convict, convert and consecrate our hearts and our lives that we may become "lights of the world" and "salt of the earth" — For your greatest glory. In Christ's sake. Amen.

### **HYMN OF PRAISE**

#### **"Worship the Lord"**

Chorus: Worship the Lord, worship the Father,  
The Spirit, the Son, raising our hands in devotion to God who is One.

Raising our hands as a sign of rejoicing, And with our lips our togetherness voicing,  
giving ourselves to a life of creativeness, Worship and work must be one. (Cho.)

Praying and training that we be a blessing And by our workmanship daily expressing  
We are committed to serving humanity. Worship and work must be one. (Cho.)

### **LIGHTING OF CANDLES**

Liturgist 1: We will light a light in the Name of God  
Who lit the world  
And breathe into them the breath of life  
Into every creation.



Liturgist 2: We will light a light in the Name of Jesus Christ  
Who saved the world  
And stretched out his hand to us.

Liturgist 3: We will light a light in the Name of the Spirit  
Who embraces the whole creation  
And blesses each creation with love.

#### **THE COMMUNITY EXPRESSES APPRECIATION**

#### **AWARDING OF PLAQUES TO FIRST TEN GIVERS (Conference)**

#### **RESOLUTION OF THANKS**

#### **THE ACT OF CONFESSION/ABSOLUTION**

Liturgist 2: God, you know us as we are, you know our selfishness,  
our anger and violence inside our homes and work places, our bitterness and fears  
our hardness of heart, our jealousies and deliberate blindness, our need to begin again.

All: In your mercy and love, forgive us, change and renew us.

#### **THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON**

Minister: God forgives you in Jesus Christ,  
Forgive others.  
Forgive yourself.  
Forgive you in Jesus

People: God forgives you in Jesus Christ,  
Forgive others.  
Forgive yourself.  
Forgive you in Jesus

#### **DANCE OF UNITY**

#### **THE ACT OF PROCLAMATION**

Scripture Romans 12:3-16a  
The Word in Song  
Shared Reflections

#### **INSTALLATION AND CONSECRATION OF COMMISSION MEMBERS**

#### **HYMN OF CONSECRATION**

"Christ of the Upward Way" SURSUM CORDA

*(Each one will light a candle of commitment during the singing)*

Christ of the Upward Way, My Guide divine, Where Thou hast set Thy feet May I place mine;  
And move and march wherever Thou hast trod, Keeping face forward up the hill of God.

Give me the heart to hear Thy voice and will That without fault or fear I may fulfill  
Thy purpose with a glad and holy zest, Like one who would not bring less than his best.

Give me the good stout arm To shield the right, And wield Thy sword of truth With all my might,  
That, in the warfare I must wage for Thee, More than a victor I may ever be.

Christ of the Upward Way My Guide divine, Where Thou hast set Thy feet May I place mine;  
And when Thy last call comes serene and clear, Calm may my answer be, "Lord, I am here." Amen.

#### **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

In a society whose ideals are power, possession and pleasure,  
I pray that I may be a sign of what it really means to love.

I will do my best to be a sign that Christ Jesus alone is the Lord of history —  
that he is present here in our midst —  
and that he is capable of inspiring  
a love mightier than our own instincts, mightier than death itself.

My own desire is to lead a life in the following of Christ —  
he who was poor, chaste, and obedient to the will of his Parent, our God.

I wish to live for Christ alone as a true disciple.

I promise our Savior Jesus Christ that I will be faithful — in sickness and in health, in youth and old age,  
in tranquility and persecution, in joy and sorrow.

I promise to do my best to share in Christ's incarnation among the poorest of the poor, and to imitate his  
poverty and solidarity with them in their struggle for freedom, for justice and fullness of life. Amen.

#### **HYMN OF FAITH**

"Worship the Lord"

Called to be partners with God in Creation Honouring Christ as the Lord of the nation,  
We must be ready for risk and for sacrifice, Worship and work must be one!

Chorus:      Worship the Lord, worship the Father,  
                 The Spirit, the Son, raising our hands in devotion to God who is One.

Bring the bread and the wine to the table, Asking that we may be fed and enabled  
Truly united, to show solidarity Worship and work must be one! (Cho.)

Now in response to the life you are giving, Help us, O Father, to offer our living,  
Seeking a just and a healing society, Worship and work must be one! (Cho.)

#### **THE ADJOURNMENT**

The Chairperson

#### **THE AGAPE MEAL**

#### **THE BLESSING OF THE COMMUNITY** (open palms)

Celebrant 1: Blessed are you, O God Eternal Creator of the Universe  
                 Who empowers the spirit-stewards of the wind, rain, sun, moon,  
                 stars and the whole cosmic energy,  
                 That we, women from different parts of this earth,  
                 should come together in this sacred time and space.

Celebrant 2: Blessed are you, O God Eternal Creator of the Universe  
                 Who moulds us with our diverse cultures and colourful individuality,  
                 That we may feel the awesome mystery and endure your creativity.

Celebrant 3: Blessed are you, Eternal Creator of the Universe  
                 Who sent us Jesus our Saviour, Teacher, Healer, Friend and Brother,  
                 That we may experience freedom and truth, abundant life and love.

All:            Blessed are you, Eternal Creator of the Universe  
                 Who gives us the Holy Spirit,  
                 That we may receive grace and empowerment even as we fall and forget your Way,  
                 That we may know inner peace, even as we struggle for justice,  
                 That we may learn unity in our diversity.

#### **THE BLESSING OF THE FOOD**

Celebrant 1: (lifting the grains and vegetable)  
                 Blessed are you, O God Eternal Creator of the Universe  
                 Who gives us grains and vegetables from the fields.

Celebrant 2: Blessed are the stewards of the mountains  
And the fields who take care of these grains and vegetables.

All: Blessed are the women, children and men  
Who plant and tend, gather and pack, cook and serve  
That these grains and vegetables be shared together  
To nourish our bodies and our life together.

Celebrant 3: (lifting the platter of fish, fowl)  
Blessed are you, O God Eternal Creator of the Universe  
Who provides us with food from the waters and farms.

Celebrant 1: Blessed are the spirit stewards of the water  
and the farms who take care of these.

All: Blessed are the women, children and men  
Who feed and gather, pack and carry, cook and serve.  
That these food be shared to nourish our bodies and our life together

Celebrant 2: (lifting fruits and water)  
Blessed are you, O God Eternal Creator of the Universe  
Who gives us fruits from the trees and water from the springs.

Celebrant 3: Blessed are the spirit of the trees, mountains, gardens, and springs  
who take care of these fruits and water.

All: Blessed are the women, children and men who plant and tend, gather and carry,  
That these fruits and water be shared to nourish our bodies and our life together.  
We praise and thank you, Creating and Sustaining God For all spirit-stewards,  
For all these bounty and persons bound with it.  
May our intentionality in this National Council meeting  
Be aligned and re-aligned with Your will  
That we may become worthy to partake of this meal.  
In Christ's name. Amen.

**THE SHARING OF THE AGAPE MEAL** (each one serving the other person first)

#### **THANKSGIVING PRAYER**

#### **HYMN OF DEDICATION**

"That's Why We Are UCCP"

We do believe in one God, Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer  
of everyone's life in Jesus Christ he became man  
And rules as Lord of Lords in Spirit, He guides us all along

Chorus: That's why we are UCCP He taught us just what the Lord has said  
To live a life in community With God and man Assured of life even after death  
No more sorrow and no more defeat There's only love, justice and peace  
All creations new.

The Kingdom of God is present Where faith in Christ is shared  
When healing is given to the sick Where food is bestowed to the hungry  
And light is to the blind And freedom to the captives and oppressed.

#### **PRAYER OF COMMITMENT**

General Secretary

#### **THE BLESSING**

All: God, send us as apostles into the world to increase our faith;  
send us as prophets to open people's eyes;  
send us as teachers to instruct others' hearts;

send us as evangelists to lead others to Christ;  
send us as pastors to bind others in love  
and send us as healers to reconcile and make others whole;  
through Jesus Christ our Savior;  
unto Whom be the glory and majesty and power forevermore. Amen.

#### **THE KISS OF PEACE/EMBRACE AND HAND OF FELLOWSHIP**

*(A brief moment of silence in preparation to go out into the world.)*

#### **EXIT MUSIC (or) SOUND OF THE AGONG**

## **HOW TO HAVE A RICH AND BEAUTIFUL SERVICE OF LITURGICAL WORSHIP**

**By Duff Tucker**

Simplicity is the key to worship in the rural church, often through necessity.

In other words, the rural church can perform elaborate services on occasion, if it will labor to fulfill certain conditions:

1. The idea must be developed over the years that Christmas Eve is a time of worship, not of "programs."
2. The congregation must realize that services are performed unto God and are not entertainments.
3. Rehearsal, and then more rehearsal, is needed. A choir, in town or city, must slave at its task. Each tiny angel must be shown exactly where to stand, and the angels' mothers impressed with the honor of serving in God's house on Christmas Eve.
4. A competent choir director is a "must." The church without one should not attempt choir work. It can almost be categorically said that all choir music is difficult, even the so-called "simple things" if they are any good. The Lord accepts the efforts of a congregation in the singing of hymns. But if the choir is dedicated to its task, a poor number is inexcusable.

The choir does not sit in the loft every Sunday. Rather it is scattered through the congregation for two reasons: first, it improves the singing quality of the congregation without their knowing about it; and second, it does away with weekly rehearsals and the sense of strain which develops when a village choir must rehearse every week ... "world without end. Amen."

5. A good musician is another must. A good pianist is much to be desired to a poor organist. The lack of adequate accompaniment is doing more to spoil rural church worship than almost any other one factor. One solution is for the rural church to pay for the training of a young person.
6. A board of trustees with enough sense of the values in corporate worship to provide a proper sanctuary is a great help.
7. Continual practice on the part of the congregation in the use of liturgical prayers, etc., is to be desired. A congregation cannot be expected to read the "Magnificat" or to respond with traditional responses unless they have read psalms Sunday after Sunday and heard liturgical prayers month after month.
8. A willingness on the part of the congregation to follow the lead of the pastor in worship, not being disturbed when something new is suggested, is also to be desired. An ancient plain song is a far cry from a mid-western gospel, song, to which one might square dance with pleasure. On the other hand, a pastor should know that this is the twentieth century and that a few forms of worship have been developed since the Middle Ages.
9. Infinite attention to detail is needful. An elaborate service is of the nature of a drama, and while it may look smooth and simple, someone has worked on every item — even the color of the light bulbs in the manger scene is important.

## WHY THE CHURCH YEAR

Inherent in any culture and therefore in any religion; is the association of events to proper times and commemorating these with fitting observances. Hence, calendars have sprung from the common life-experience of every sharing community as the means of keeping the observances together.

For the Christian, however, there is more to the calendar than just being a measure of time or a mere record of events. The Christian Year marks an annual celebration of the whole of life-of living out the whole gospel of Christ. all the seven seasons of the Christian Year constitute the whole gospel of God's purposeful love in and through Jesus Christ: from advent to Christmas, to epiphany, to lent, to easter, to pentecost and to kingdomtide. For this reason, the Christian Year, otherwise known as the Liturgical Year, may also be rightly called the "Gospel Year."

More than just being a commemoration of past events, the Christian Year calls for actual living again of the realities on which the Church sustains her life. In celebrating the year, the mystery-the Word — with which the church has been entrusted is proclaimed, communicated and participated in, elevating into daily custom the meaningful events of experiencing the bountiful of love of God and enhancing the fellowship of believers across times and places by a common confession.

Formalized as it is now, the Christian Year comprises two main sections at approximately six months each. The Lord's half year begins with the advent and continues until Pentecost. Various seasons fall under this section but the main emphasis is the earthly ministry of Jesus. The church's half year, otherwise known as the Kingdomtide, is the section devoted to Christian instruction and growth with the emphasis on the kingship of God in the whole of life. Special colors have been so designated to keep the rhythm and variety of the Year as well as to indicate the particular character and mood of each season.

### A. The Advent Season

This season marks the start of the Christian Year. Beginning on the Sunday nearest to November 30 and running through four subsequent Sundays until December 25 or Christmas day, this season is one of preparation of ourselves — for readying the mind and soul for the celebration of Christmas and Epiphany. It is one of penitence for the renewing of the under-standing of God's action and for entering into the spirit of being God's children through Christ. It is one of expectancy for the hopeful anticipation of Christ's coming not only as a Babe but more so as the Lord of our lives.

Thus coupled with penitence and expectancy is the profound sense of *Jesus'* judging over us: the first coming has to be seen in relation to his second coming when Jesus shall judge all creation not in the way of condemning it but redeeming it for the love of God.

The element of seriousness and subduedness suggesting penitence is aptly depicted by purple, a color which is associated with royalty as suggested in the preparation for and expectancy of Christ's coming to reign.

### B. Christmas Season

The Christmastide, begins on Christmas eve and lasts until Epiphany eve or January 5. To commemorate the birth of the divine Son and his full participation in human nature, this season is marked by rejoicing and good cheer. To celebrate the incarnation is to participate in the mystery of Jesus' at-once involvement in the divine and the human. Viewed in the whole gospel, this needs to be seen in the light of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, which closely follow the season.

Because the mood of this season is joy for the coming of the Light of the world, white has been deemed most appropriate to symbolize light amidst darkness. Moreover, white symbolizes purity of the One to come, that is, the sinlessness of Jesus, the perfect man.

### C. The Epiphany Season

Starting on January 6, this season continues until the third Sunday before Lent. It is marked with the need and desire to share the Christian faith with others outside the fold: it is for celebrating the universal revelation of Jesus, his being "epiphanized" or shown forth as the Savior of all through his manifestation to the Gentiles through the Wise Men from the East.

The color to enhance observance of this season is **white**, still for the joy of God's appearing to all people, and hence, for the purity of his love for all.

#### **D. The Lenten Season**

Lenten begins on the 40th day before Easter, normally on a Wednesday called Ash Wednesday, and ends on Easter Eve or the Saturday noon before Easter. It is a season of preparation for the celebration of Eastertide through self-examination and even penitential self-discipline for us to be aware, receptive and eager to participate in the celebration of Easter.

The mood of this season is penitence which is symbolized by **purple**. On Good Friday, **black** is used to depict gloom, death and mourning.

#### **E. The Easter Season**

Eastertide begins in Easter Sunday and ends on Pentecost which is 50 days after Easter. This is the season commemorating the resurrection of Jesus Christ which is at the heart of the Christian gospel. While Easter is known as the "Queen of Christian Festivals", celebration of the Eastertide centers around the resurrection and ascension to emphasize that Jesus was not simply raised up "from death to life" but even raised up to sit "at the right hand of the Father."

And so to depict the purity of him who rose to reign, white has been designated to characterize the celebration of this season. White also symbolizes the thankful joy of believers for what it means for them -to be raised up" with Jesus Christ.

#### **F. The Season of Pentecost**

Pentecost comes 50 days after Easter. The season begins on that day and ends on the last Sunday of August. The season is for celebrating the descent of the Holy Spirit, as Jesus had promised, upon his disciples. Since this marks the "empowering" of the church by the Holy Spirit as its life-giver, counselor and comforter, this is also a season for the church's anniversary.

**Red** symbolizes the tongues of fire which descended upon the apostles during the Pentecost. It also depicts the zeal of the early Christians, and even the blood of those who died for the faith.

#### **G. The Trinity Season or Kingdomtide**

This season follows the end of Pentecost and continues through until the beginning of the Advent Season. It is the period so indicated for the growth of the church in the Kingdom. Thus, it looks upward with the ascension in awareness of Christ's eternal kingship and looks ahead to his coming again as the ultimate judge and the redeeming Savior.

There are no great historic religious festivals during this season yet it stands solidly in the midst of our daily responsibilities. Implicit thus is the emphasis of the rulership of Christ in all of life and at all times, an affirmation of the whole-gospel kingship as indicated in the celebration throughout the Christian Year.

**Green** is the color for this season to stand for the growth and aliveness of those who live their life wholly under the kingship of God through Jesus Christ. It also symbolizes new life and new beginnings for those who acknowledge his kingship and draw upon his teachings for the conduct of their lives.

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## THE USE OF SYMBOLS IN WORSHIP

*Historically, symbols have been part of worship. For many centuries, various communities of faith have used symbols to carry on traditions — bread, wine, cross, light, water..., the way the altar is built, how people make offerings ... use of candles, stained glass windows, sacrificial animals, representations of good and evil, like honey and bitter water ... Christians celebrate phases of life using symbols from nature baptism, water; confirmation, marriage, rice in some cultures, rite of passage, soil ... Images of light, water; rocks, stones ... are often used to express some of the characteristics of God. As we can see, most of these symbols are drawn from nature. Tini Brugge*

Symbols and images transcend the limitations of language, and are, therefore, powerful. They represent meanings that are more profound than what is normally perceived. As summarized representations of reality, symbols serve as a means of communicating truths larger than life. As such, symbols are statements in themselves.

The great symbols often used are not just random symbols. When Jesus chose bread and wine to represent his body and blood, he allowed us to think of food, work, God's grace, sacrifice, eating and drinking ... as interconnected. Symbols keep worship rooted in reality.

*A symbol is every image that grows from the intrinsic experience of a community. Paul Tillich*

Symbols are essential in worship, as worship deals with realities which cannot be expressed or talked about in the usual ways but which can be alluded to. For example, we cannot see God, but God's presence can be expressed through actions, objects or people to which we attach meanings as Christians.

Symbols grow in meaning and complexity over time. Most symbols are culturally constructed and are transmitted from generation to generation. These are usually derived from elements in nature — like the sun, the moon, trees as in the tree of life — and instilled through myths and legends. Many symbols, although based on particular contexts, are considered universal. In Christianity, the cross, bread, wine, fish ... are of major significance.

## WORKING WITH SYMBOLS

It is good to share our faith with Christians all over the world. We may do this through-rituals and symbols which speak a language not fixed in words. Elements of nature can become symbols through which Christians can express their faith and their vision of justice, peace and a sustainable creation.

### **The Cross: the Tree of Life**

Perhaps the most visible symbol in Christian worship today is the cross. There are different possibilities in the use of the cross in worship.

The *Greek cross*, for example. It has arms which seem to reach out to heaven and to the earth. Maybe this type of cross will help people, especially in colonized countries like in South America, think more of salvation than of conquerors.

The form of the cross *crux decussate*, using three arms of the same length, reminds us of the tree of life. The three arms can also symbolize the trinity. The people can make this cross together.

### **The Communion Table: an Altar of Earth**

*You shall make an altar of earth for me, and you shall sacrifice on it both your whole-offerings and your shared-offerings ..*

*If you make an altar of stones for me, you must not build it of hewn stones, for if you use a chisel on it, you will profane it ... Exodus 20:24-25*

The earth is the surface that connects to the heavens. On this surface are a great number of elements and things which can help us to live in faith — things that remind us of the gospel, of words from the old and the new

testaments, of the lives of saints and martyrs, of the beauty and glory of creation, of the wisdom and love of the Creator ...

Many churches use a communion table, mostly in remembrance of the *Last Supper* and the ultimate sacrifice that Jesus made for all of humanity. It is where the communion elements — bread and wine — are placed. Symbolically as well, it is at this table where worshippers lift up their offering, bringing themselves before God more clearly.

### **Water: the Source of Life**

*Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water that I shall give him will never suffer thirst CMV71101e. The water that I shall give him will be an inner spring always welling up for eternal life. John 4:13-14*

Water is a basic element. With water starts life; the oceans, the algae, the fish, the plants. All organisms contain water and cannot survive and regenerate without water. Living water, not polluted, is very important to sustain life.

Water gives new birth, new life. Water refreshes, cleanses, purifies ... With water, in the Jordan river, John baptized Jesus. Jesus himself is called *the living water*, the source of life. Therefore, Christians use water as a sign of new life.

### **Light: the Life of the World**

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. The Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. And God said, "Let there be light", and there was light. And God saw that the light was good ... Genesis 1:1-4*

*Light has come into this world ... John 3:19*

The sun, which brings light, is often used as a symbol of God, the light of life given to all creation. In the New Testament, we read of Christ, who, in darkness, can be as a lamp for our feet ... Light also symbolizes truth.

When we plan a worship space, we can make it possible for sunlight to be part of it. In Israel, a chapel was built with windows that open up to heaven, where the light of the sun can always shine into the space inside. In many churches, a round open windows is built over the communion table.

*Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick ... Matthew 5:15*

People in ancient times used various methods of artificial lighting torches, candles, but mostly lamps with wicks burning with oil. The lamps usually had a rounded receptacle. As the light gives by such an oil lamp was sometimes not enough, several lamps were sometimes grouped together. Another way of increasing the quantity of light was to place the lamp on a high stand or in a candlestick as described in Matthew.

To symbolize light, many churches use candles or oil lamps. When using candles, it is important not to lose the connection with nature. Use candles made of wax from bees. If using lamps, use oil from plants. To symbolize eternal light, a gold-colored circle can be placed carefully over the lamp.

### **Fragrance: the Scent of Holiness**

*Make an altar on which to burn incense, make it of acacia wood ... It is most holy ... Exodus 30:1, 10*

In the Old Testament, we read of how fragrant spices were used to sanctify the table of honor.

*God said to Moses: take fragrant spices ... Make it into incense, perfume ... salted and pure, a holy thing ... Exodus 30:34-37*

Perfume gives a pleasant smell. The scent is something we cannot keep in our hands; it is in the atmosphere, not visible, only smelled. Good scent helps us to remember good, holy things. In the Bible, we read that twice a day, the priest prepares to offer perfume in the temple. Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians still use perfume and incense in worship.



When we worship, incense can be burned during meditation or praying. Or the worship can end with the burning of incense — from earth the scent ascends to heaven.

Fragrant flowers or branches of trees may also be used.

### **Sanctuary Symbols**

Our sanctuary is where people of faith gather, it is where they live, move and have their being. (Acts 17:28) It is where people enter the faith through baptism, enter marriage with weddings, enter the next life with funerals, and enter each Sunday to celebrate the goodness of God during the in-between times. As such a rich place of life, it tells the world who we are as a people of God.

Central to our faith is the Cross. It can be placed not on the back wall, but suspended in the middle of the people and over the table where the people of God are fed the Bread of Life. It reminds us that we, too, make sacrifices and find ourselves suspended between a heaven that is to be and a world that is now. The Cross continues the theme signifying God's love for all people, and God's transforming power given through sacrifice to each unique individual.

The Communion Table swirls the wood grains into one masterful whole, symbolizing the Kingdom where God combines all in to one glorious pattern. Through eating together at God's table, we believe that all people become equals as members of God's family, nurtured and fed by God's love.

And finally, the Baptismal Font. The font's cascading water reminds us of God's overflowing love (Isaiah 30:28) as we are adopted into the Family of God through baptism. Also, after our baptism, which calls us into ministry, our task becomes one of letting justice roll down like water, and righteousness like an overflowing stream. (Amos 5:24)

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