

# **PASTOR'S BOOK OF SERVICES**



**EVANGELICAL  
CONGREGATIONAL  
CHURCH**



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## INTRODUCTION

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The original, *Pastor's Book of Occasional Services*, has proven to be a valuable resource to our pastors. Desiring to update this collection of services and liturgies, I tasked the Faith and Doctrine Committee to help me with this project. In order to best understand this collection of services, give careful attention to the introduction to the original project by Bishop John Moyer.

*"The committee, in compiling this volume, does not propose to present a recommended or standard service of worship, which has to be followed by each of our congregations. Our denomination has always advocated a position of free worship. Each congregation prepares its own order of service to meet the needs of its worshipers. ... Diversity in worship is encouraged; however, healthy Evangelical Congregational churches must always worship as Christ instructs, in 'spirit and truth.' Such worship is characterized by openness to the guidance of the Holy Spirit."*

This updated volume, *Pastor's Book of Services*, replaces the original volume, titled, *Pastor's Book of Occasional Services*. We have added some new liturgies, updated language in the original liturgies and kept some just the way they were. We realize that modern pastors have unlimited worship resources at the click of a button, on the World Wide Web; however, it is our desire to provide liturgies and rituals that are centered in a biblical foundation and linked to our history and heritage. Our prayer is that this updated volume will be helpful for our pastors and congregations in the worship of our great God and King.

In Christ's Service,  
Rev. Randy Sizemore  
Bishop

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**SECTION I**

**SACRAMENTS**

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## **SACRAMENT OF INFANT BAPTISM - SERVICE 1**

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Christian baptism is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ and administered by the church from its beginning. The formal application of water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is a sign and seal to recognize that the person so consecrated stands in a holy covenant relation to God and His people (Article 21, *Articles of Faith*). Recognizing this child/these children as under the atonement of Christ and as part of the spiritual family of God, we consider him/her/them (a) worthy subject(s) for Christian baptism.

Let us give reverent attention to the reading from God's Word, the Gospel of Mark, chapter 10, verses 13 through 16: "People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them."

### **Address to the Parents/Parent:**

As parents/the parent presenting your child for baptism you signify your own personal faith in Jesus Christ; you bear witness to your belief that this/your child stands in holy covenant relation to God and His people through the finished work of Christ, and you publicly affirm the reality of God's grace at work in the life of your child.

Is this your belief and purpose in presenting your child for baptism?

If so, answer: IT IS.

**Parental Declaration:**

Having affirmed your personal faith in Jesus Christ, it is important that you also recognize the awesome and serious responsibility that is yours as parents/a parent in the raising of the child entrusted to your care.

Will you set before the child the example of a godly life, and will you pray for and with your child, instructing him/her in the elements/beliefs/doctrines of the Christian faith?

If so, answer: WE/I WILL.

Will you seek to lead him/her to acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior, train him/her in the Christian life, show him/her the way of holiness, and endeavor to bring him/her into the membership of the church?

If so, answer: WE/I WILL, BY THE HELP OF GOD.

**Sponsor's Declaration:**

Having heard the promises of the parents, will you who have come forward with them promise to assist them in carrying out their resolve?

If so, answer: WE WILL.

**The Baptism:**

*(The pastor may take the child into his arms for the baptism if so desired.)*

What name is given this child?

\_\_\_\_\_ *(full name of child)*, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*(The child may be returned to the parents.)*

**Prayer for the Child:**

Let us pray: Our heavenly Father, we thank you that Your loving arms are open to encompass all who come to you in faith and that our children are in a covenant relationship (that our children are invited/called into a covenant relationship) with You and Your Church. We thank you for your unmerited favor toward us and the impartation of your grace upon us on the occasion of the Sacrament of Baptism. May the fullness of Your grace be upon this child whom we have baptized in Your name. Grant that the Holy Spirit may guide \_\_\_\_\_ in the path of truth. Lead \_\_\_\_\_ to accept Christ by faith, give \_\_\_\_\_ victory over evil, empower \_\_\_\_\_ to live in holiness, and at last receive \_\_\_\_\_ into Your eternal home. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

**Congregational Declaration:**

Children of believing parents, through Christian Baptism, become a special responsibility of the Church. It is our duty and privilege as a congregation to receive this child into the care of this local church and to minister to his/her welfare in every way possible. It is also our responsibility to assist the parents in fulfilling the commitments they have made here today.

As a congregation, you too shall have a part in the spiritual growth of this family. They need you for prayer support, to assist in Bible teaching, for sharing in the fellowship of believers and to provide opportunities, facilities and personnel through which both parents and child can enter into the fullness of the Christian experience and expression (into the fullness of the Christian faith and life).



Will you, as members of this/the congregation, promise to do all in your power to show this child true godliness by kind words and loving deeds? Will you undertake to provide facilities and opportunities for Christian training and fellowship? And will you assist the parents in bringing the child to a personal commitment of his/her life to Christ?

If so, answer: WE WILL.

**Prayer for Parents and Congregation:**

Almighty God, bless these parents who have dedicated themselves to the task of bringing up their child to seek and to know Christ. Grant them wisdom and power, love and compassion, tenderness and firmness as together they strive to fulfill their vows made this day before You and this congregation.

Grant that the people of this congregation who have agreed to assist in the training of the child, may always with openness welcome every opportunity to share in the fulfilling of this awesome responsibility. May this congregation continue to provide a loving atmosphere, the Biblical teaching, and the spiritual unity in which the family can grow. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Benediction:**

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

## SACRAMENT OF INFANT BAPTISM - SERVICE 2

---

Christian baptism is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ and administered by the church from its beginning. The formal application of water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is a sign and seal to recognize that the person so consecrated stands in a holy covenant relation to God and his people (Article 21, *Articles of Faith*). Recognizing this child/these children as under the atonement of Christ and as part of the spiritual family of God, we consider him/her/them (a) worthy subject(s) for Christian baptism.

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Is this your belief and purpose in presenting your child for baptism?

If so, answer: IT IS.

**The Renunciations and Profession of Faith:**

Do you renounce the devil and all his works, and reject the evil powers of this world?

Answer: I RENOUNCE THEM.

Do you repent of your sin, turn to Jesus Christ, and confess him as your Lord above all earthly authorities and Savior from sin and its consequences?

Answer: I DO.

Do you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and believe that the Holy Bible is the actual, authoritative Word of the one true and living God, and that therein only is proclaimed the way of salvation?

Answer: I DO.

Will you obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in them all the days of your life by the grace and power of God?

Answer: I WILL.

**Parental Declaration:**

Having affirmed your personal faith in Jesus Christ, it is important that you also recognize the awesome and serious responsibility that is yours as parents/a parent in the raising of the child entrusted to your care.

Will you set before the child the example of a godly life, and will you pray for and with your child, instructing him/her in the elements beliefs/doctrines of the Christian faith?

If so, answer: WE/I WILL.

Will you seek to lead him/her to acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior, train him/her in the Christian life, show him/her the way of holiness, and endeavor to bring him/her into the membership of the church?

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Having heard the promises of the parents, will you who have come forward with them promise to assist them in carrying out their resolve?

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Let us pray: Our heavenly Father, we thank you that your loving arms are open to encompass all who come to you in faith and that our children are in a covenant relationship with you and your Church. We thank you for your unmerited favor toward us and the impartation of your grace upon us on the occasion of the Sacrament of Baptism. May the fullness of your grace be upon this child whom we have baptized in your name. Grant that the Holy Spirit may guide \_\_\_\_\_ in the path of truth. Lead \_\_\_\_\_ to accept Christ by faith, give \_\_\_\_\_ victory over evil, empower \_\_\_\_\_ to live in holiness, and at last receive

\_\_\_\_\_ into Your eternal home. Through Jesus Christ we pray. Amen.

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Will you, as members of this congregation, promise to do all in your power to show this child true godliness by kind words and loving deeds? Will you undertake to provide facilities and opportunities for Christian training and fellowship? And will you assist the parents in bringing the child to a personal commitment of his/her life to Christ?

If so, answer: WE WILL.

**Prayer for Parents and Congregation:**

Almighty God, bless these parents who have dedicated themselves to the task of bringing up their child to seek and to know Christ. Grant them wisdom and power, love and compassion, tenderness and firmness as together they strive to fulfill their vows made this day before you and this congregation.

Grant that the people of this congregation who have agreed to assist in the training of the child, may always with openness welcome every opportunity to share in the fulfilling of this awesome responsibility. May this congregation continue to provide a loving atmosphere, the Biblical teaching, and the

spiritual unity in which the family can grow. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Benediction:**

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

## SACRAMENT OF ADULT BAPTISM - SERVICE 1

---

*At the appropriate time, the candidates shall present themselves before the congregation. A hymn fitting the occasion may be sung.*

### **The Minister Shall Address the Congregation:**

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Let us hear the Word of God as it is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, the second chapter: "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 gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, everyone who the Lord our God calls to Him.' ... So those who received his word were baptized. ... and they devoted themselves to the Apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers."

Beloved in Christ, forasmuch as our Savior did commission His disciples to go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of His great mercy, he will grant to this/these person(s) now to be baptized his grace, so that he/she/they may serve him faithfully, be (a) true member(s) of the Church, and (an) heir(s) of eternal life.

### **The Minister Shall Then Address the Candidate:**

We greatly rejoice that God the Holy Spirit has brought you to repentance of sin, and to personal faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. By presenting yourself/yourselves for this sacrament, you declare your faith, and your purpose to live the new life in Christ. That all here present may know of your profession, please respond to the following questions (*individually*).

**The Renunciations and Profession of Faith:**

Do you renounce the devil and all his works, and reject the evil powers of this world?

Answer: I RENOUNCE THEM.

Do you renounce the empty promises and deadly deceits of this world that corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

Answer: I RENOUNCE THEM.

Do you renounce the sinful desires of the flesh that draw you from the love of God?

Answer: I RENOUNCE THEM.

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and confess him as your Lord above all earthly authorities and Savior from sin and its consequences?

Answer: I DO.

Do you joyfully receive the Christian faith, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and believe that the Holy Bible is the actual, authoritative Word of the one true and living God, and that therein only is proclaimed the way of salvation?

Answer: I DO.

Will you obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in them all the days of your life?

Answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Have you experienced the forgiveness of your sins through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord?

Answer: I HAVE.



Are you determined by the grace of God, to live the Christian life, to devote yourself to the study of God's Word and to prayer, and to be a faithful participant in the work of His kingdom?

Answer: I AM.

*The congregation is then asked to affirm their commitment to support the baptismal Candidate(s) in the faith.*

Will you who witness these vows encourage this person/these persons in the faith and do all in your power to support this person/these persons in his/her/their life in Christ?

Answer: WE WILL.

*Then the Minister shall ask each candidate to state his/her full name.*

**A Prayer of Thanksgiving Over the Water May be Offered (Optional):**

Heavenly Father, we ask you now to sanctify this water by the power of your Holy Spirit. Grant that \_\_\_\_\_ (Name(s)) be cleansed from all sin and receive the fullness of your grace, that he/she/they may ever remain faithful in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Then the Minister shall repeat the candidate's name, sprinkle or pour water on his/her forehead OR immerse him/her in water, with the Baptismal Formula:*

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

**Then shall the Minister say to those baptized:**

And now dear brother(s)/sister(s), the vows of the Lord are upon you. Of your own free will you have sought this solemn Christian sacrament. You have here pledged allegiance to Jesus Christ, and to Him alone. His appointment is upon you, and you

go forth a confessor of Christ before the world. Be steadfast and true, and let your baptism prove the sacramental seal of a lifelong covenant with God, for our Savior said, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father in heaven."

*Those baptized may here be encouraged to share a brief word of personal testimony before the congregation.*

*The Minister shall conclude with prayer.*

## SACRAMENT OF ADULT BAPTISM - SERVICE 2

---

*At the appropriate time, the candidates shall present themselves before the congregation. A hymn fitting the occasion may be sung.*

### **The Minister Shall Address the Congregation:**

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Beloved in Christ, forasmuch as our Savior did commission His disciples to go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we beseech you to call upon God the Father, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of His great mercy, He will grant to this/these person(s) now to be baptized His grace, so that he/she/they may serve Him faithfully, be (a) true member(s) of the Church, and (an) heir(s) of eternal life.

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Answer: I DO.

Will you obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in them all the days of your life?

Answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Have you experienced the forgiveness of your sins through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord?

Answer: I HAVE.

Are you determined by the grace of God, to live the Christian life, to devote yourself to the study of God's Word and to prayer, and to be a faithful participant in the work of His kingdom?

Answer: I AM.

*The congregation is then asked to affirm their commitment to support the baptismal Candidate(s) in the faith.*

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support these persons in their life in Christ?

Answer: WE WILL.

Let us join with these Candidate(s) to proclaim our faith in the words of the ancient baptismal confession, the Apostles' Creed.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST, HIS 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;  
HE DESCENDED TO THE DEAD.  
ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN;  
HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN,  
IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER,  
AND WILL COME AGAIN 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.

*Then the Minister shall ask each candidate to state his/her full name.*

**A Prayer of Thanksgiving Over the Water May be Offered (Optional):**

Heavenly Father, we ask you now to sanctify this water by the power of your Holy Spirit. Grant that \_\_\_\_\_ (Name(s)) be cleansed from all sin and receive the fullness of your grace, that he/she/they may ever remain faithful in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Then the Minister shall repeat the candidate's name, sprinkle or pour water on his/her forehead, OR immerse him/her in water, with the Baptismal Formula:*

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

**Then shall the Minister say to those baptized:**

And now dear brother(s)/sister(s), the vows of the Lord are upon you. Of your own free will you have sought this solemn Christian sacrament. You have here pledged allegiance to Jesus Christ, and to Him alone. His appointment is upon you, and you go forth a confessor of Christ before the world. Be steadfast and true, and let your baptism prove the sacramental seal of a lifelong covenant with God, for our Savior said, "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father in heaven."

*Those baptized may here be encouraged to share a brief word of personal testimony before the congregation.*

*The Minister shall conclude with prayer.*

## SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION - SERVICE 1

---

*The Lord's Supper should be observed at least four times annually in each congregation. While four times annually is set forth as a minimum, greater frequency is not only permissible but encouraged. Holy Communion may be administered at the altar or in the pews, or for special services on Maundy Thursday or Good Friday, it may be celebrated in a "Last Supper" setting.*

*As the normal setting for the celebration of the sacrament is the congregation gathered for worship, it is assumed that the sacrament shall be preceded by a sermon based upon an appropriate passage of Scripture.*

**Collect for Purity** (May be prayed by officiant or as a unison prayer of the congregation):

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

### **The Invitation to Holy Communion:**

You that do truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his holy ways: Draw near with faith, and take this Holy Sacrament to your comfort, and make your humble confession to almighty God. (*Source: Traditional*)

### **Unison Prayer of Confession followed by Silent Prayer:**

Almighty and merciful God, we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not



to have done. O Lord, have mercy upon us. Spare those who confess their sins. Restore those who are penitent, according to your promises declared to the world in Christ Jesus, our Lord. And grant, O merciful God, for his sake, that we may live a holy, just, and humble life to the glory of your holy name. Amen.  
(Source: *Traditional*)

Or

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 and mind and strength. We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen. (Source: *Traditional*)

**Words of Assurance of Pardon:**

Hear these comforting words recorded in Holy Scripture for all that sincerely turn to the Lord in repentance and faith for forgiveness:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” (*John 3:16-17 NIV*)

Or

“Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” (*1 Timothy 1:15a NIV*)

Or

“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense - Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.” (1 John 2:1-2 NIV)

### **Prayer of Consecration / Words of Institution:**

On the night that he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take, eat, this is my body, which is given for you: Do this in remembrance of me.” Likewise, after supper, Jesus took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them saying, “Drink this all of you; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you, and for many for the forgiveness of sins: Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me.”

Send your Holy Spirit now upon these gifts of bread and cup, that we who eat and drink at this holy table might share in the life of Christ, our Lord. Sanctify us also that we might faithfully serve you in unity and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

Gracious Father, we come to this table trusting in your great mercies. May we receive this sacrament with devout, believing, and grateful hearts.

We ask these things through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray. ...

### **The Lord's Prayer**

*If the sacrament is to be served at the altar:*

*The minister shall commune first followed by the congregation.*

*If the sacrament is being served in the pews:*

*The minister shall distribute the bread trays to the Communion servants who shall distribute the trays in the pews. After the congregation has been served, the minister shall serve the Communion servants.*

*Then the minister shall say: "The body of Christ... ."*

*Then the minister and the congregation shall eat of the bread.*

*Then the minister shall distribute the cup trays to the Communion servants who shall distribute the trays in the pews. After the congregation has been served, the minister shall serve the Communion servants.*

*Then the minister shall say: "The blood of Christ shed for you... ."*

*Then the minister and the congregation shall drink of the cup.*

### **Distribution of the Bread:**

The body of Christ given for you. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

### **Distribution of the Cup:**

The blood of Christ shed for you. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for you, and be thankful.

*After the Supper is concluded, a Prayer of Thanksgiving may be shared, a hymn sung, and the Benediction offered.*

## **SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION - SERVICE 2**

---

### **The Invitation:**

Christ our Lord invites to his table all who truly love him, who earnestly repent of their sin, who dwell in charity with their neighbors, and intend to live a holy life. Draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort, making your humble confession to Almighty God. Let us pray.

### **The Confession:**

ALMIGHTY AND MOST MERCIFUL GOD,  
WE CONFESS AND LAMENT THAT WE HAVE SINNED  
AGAINST YOU  
IN THOUGHT, WORD, AND DEED.  
WE HAVE NOT LOVED YOU WITH OUR WHOLE HEART.  
WE HAVE FAILED TO BE AN OBEDIENT CHURCH.  
WE HAVE NOT LOVED OUR NEIGHBORS AS OURSELVES.  
WE ARE TRULY SORRY, AND WE HUMBLY REPENT.  
BECAUSE THE REMEMBRANCE OF OUR SIN IS MORE THAN WE  
CAN BEAR,  
HAVE MERCY ON US, AND FORGIVE US.  
FOR THE SAKE OF YOUR SON, JESUS CHRIST, PARDON US OF  
ALL THAT IS PAST,  
AND GRANT THAT WE MAY EVER SERVE YOU IN NEWNESS  
OF LIFE,  
TO THE GLORY OF YOUR HOLY NAME;  
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

### **The Pardon:**

In his great mercy, our Almighty God and heavenly Father has promised forgiveness of sins to all who repent and with true faith turn to him. May he have mercy upon you, pardon, and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The Comforting Words:**

Hear these comforting words that Jesus Christ, our Savior, says to all who truly turn to him: God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. Amen.

**The Peace:**

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be always with you.

Response: AND WITH YOUR SPIRIT.

As a forgiven and reconciled people, let us extend signs of peace, one to another.

**The Prayer of Great Thanksgiving:**

*The Sursum Corda*

The Lord be with you.

Response: AND WITH YOUR SPIRIT.

Lift up your hearts.

Response: WE LIFT THEM UP TO THE LORD.

Let us give our thanks to the Lord our God.

Response: IT IS RIGHT AND GOOD TO GIVE HIM THANKS AND PRAISE.

It is our joy to give thanks to you in all places and at all times, Almighty Father. You are the source of all truth, life, and love. You made us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When in our sinfulness we turned away from you and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God, and called us to new life in Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore, we praise you with the angels, and archangels, and all the company of heaven, forever singing this hymn to the glory of your name:

*The Sanctus (Spoken)*

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

BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.  
HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.

Or

*The Sanctus (\*Sung)*

HOLY, HOLY HOLY, LORD  
GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT,  
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FILLED WITH YOUR GLORY.  
HOLY, HOLY HOLY, LORD  
GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT,  
HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FILLED WITH YOUR GLORY.

HOSANNA! HOSANNA! IN THE HIGHEST!  
HOSANNA! HOSANNA! IN THE HIGHEST!

\* "Holy Holy Holy Lord"

*Words and Music by Peter Scholtes*

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Or

*The Sanctus (\*Sung)*

YOUR NAME IS THE HIGHEST  
YOUR NAME IS THE GREATEST  
YOUR NAME STANDS ABOVE THEM ALL  
ALL THRONES AND DOMINIONS  
ALL POWERS AND POSITIONS  
YOUR NAME STANDS ABOVE THEM ALL

AND THE ANGELS CRY HOLY  
ALL CREATION CRIES HOLY  
YOU ARE LIFTED HIGH, HOLY  
HOLY FOREVER

\* “Holy Forever”

*Words and Music by Brian Johnson, Chris Tomlin, Jason Ingram, Jenn Johnson, Phil Wickham*

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All praise and glory are yours, O God our Father, for in your tender mercy you gave your only Son, Jesus Christ, to the world. Your Spirit anointed him to bring good news to the poor, to bind up the brokenhearted, to comfort those who mourn, to proclaim freedom for captives, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, and to announce the year of the Lord’s favor. In obedience to your will, he stretched out his arms upon the wood of the cross and offered himself once for all, that by his suffering and death, we might be saved. By his resurrection, he broke the bonds of death, trampling hell and Satan under his feet. As our great high priest, he ascended to your right hand in glory, that we might come with confidence before the throne of grace.

### **The Prayer of Consecration:**

*The Words of Institution, Fraction, and Pouring*

On the night that Jesus was betrayed, he took the bread, and he gave thanks: “Blessed are you, Lord our God, king of the universe, who brings forth bread from the earth.”

And when Jesus had given thanks, he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat. This is my body which is given for you: Do this in remembrance of me.”

Response: BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKES AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD.

Likewise, after the supper, Jesus took the cup, and he gave thanks. "Blessed are you, Lord our God, king of the universe, who brings forth fruit from the vine."

And when Jesus had given thanks, he poured the cup and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and drink, all of you; for this cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for the remission of sin: Do this in remembrance of me."

Response: TO HIM WHO LOVES US AND HAS FREED US FROM OUR SINS BY HIS BLOOD, TO HIM BE GLORY AND POWER FOR EVER AND EVER! AMEN.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Therefore, let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

*The Memorial Acclamation*

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

*The Eucharistic Prayer*

We celebrate this memorial of our redemption, O Father, receiving these gifts of bread and cup with thanksgiving for the death and resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ. Sanctify them by your Word and Holy Spirit to be for us the body and blood of Christ. Sanctify us also, that we may worthily receive this holy sacrament and partake of his most blessed body and blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ and one as your church, that Christ may dwell in us and we in him. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under Christ and gather us together with all your saints in the joy of your heavenly kingdom, where we shall see our Lord face to face. We ask this through your Son, who taught us to pray:



**The Lord's Prayer:**

OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN,  
HALLOWED BE THY NAME,  
THY KINGDOM COME.  
THY WILL BE DONE,  
ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.  
GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.  
AND FORGIVE US OUR SINS,  
AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO SIN AGAINST US.  
AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION,  
BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.  
FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM,  
AND THE POWER,  
AND THE GLORY, FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.

**The Prayer of Humble Access:**

*The Kyrie Eleison*

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Response: CHRIST, HAVE MERCY UPON US.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Response: CHRIST OUR PASSOVER LAMB HAS BEEN  
SACRIFICED FOR US.

Therefore, let us keep the feast.

We do not presume to come to this your table, O merciful Lord,  
trusting in our own righteousness,  
but in your abundant and great mercies.

We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under your  
table;

but you are the same Lord whose character is always to have  
mercy.

Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord,  
so to eat the flesh of your dear Son Jesus Christ,  
and to drink his blood,  
that our sinful bodies may be made clean by his body,

and our souls washed through his most precious blood,  
and that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

**The Reception:**

The gifts of God for the people of God. Receive them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Come, for all things are now ready.

*(Parishioners commune.)*

**The Post-Communion Prayer:**

Almighty and everliving God,  
we thank you for feeding us, in these holy mysteries,  
with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood  
of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ;  
and for assuring us, through this sacrament, of your favor and  
goodness towards us:  
that we are true members of the mystical body of your Son,  
the blessed company of all faithful people;  
and are also heirs, through hope, of your everlasting kingdom.  
And we humbly ask you, heavenly Father,  
to assist us with your grace,  
that we may continue in that holy fellowship,  
and do all the good works that you have prepared for us to  
walk in;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit,  
be all honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.

**The Blessing:**

And now may 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 among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

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## **SECTION II**

### **PASTORAL OFFICES**

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## ORDINATION OF NATIONAL CONFERENCE ELDERS

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Dear friends, we present to you this brother, \_\_\_\_\_, whom God has called to be ordained an Elder in the Evangelical Congregational Church.

Let us pray. Almighty God, giver of all good gifts. It is through your Holy Spirit that you have appointed various orders of ministers in your church. Today we lift before you your servant, \_\_\_\_\_, now called to the office of Elder. We ask that you fill him with your Spirit and enable him to live with the truth of your doctrine and the holiness of life, that both by word and good example he may faithfully serve in this office, to the glory of your name and the building up of Your Church, through the death and resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. Amen.

Listen to the words Paul was inspired to write to the church in Ephesus: "But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: 'When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.' It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." (*Ephesians 4:7 & 8, 11-13*)

And now the words of our Lord Jesus who said: "I am the true vine and my Father is the gardener ... if a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit: apart from me you can do nothing ... This is to my Father's glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples ... You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit - fruit that will last. (*John 15:1-17 selected*)

**Charge to the Elder:**

\_\_\_\_\_, in your training and in the writings of the Scriptures you have learned of the dignity and importance of this office to which you are called. In this service of ordination you are charged to remember the dignity and weight of your calling: to be a messenger, watchman and steward of the Lord; to teach and admonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's flock; to gather the outcasts; to seek the lost; and to be ever ready to share the Good News of reconciliation with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. You are charged to apply yourself without reservation to the ministry to which God has called you, to continually give yourself to the reading and study of God's Word, to prayer for others and for the empowering presence of the Holy Spirit in your life. You are charged to be fully prepared to correctly explain the Word of Truth; and to conduct yourself in such a manner that you may be a godly example for others to follow as you follow Jesus.

**Examination of Elder:**

And now, that those assembled here today, in the name of Christ, may also understand your mind and will in these things, please answer the following questions before God and His Church.

Do you believe in your heart that you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the office of Elder?

If so, answer: I DO BELIEVE.

Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine essential to eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ?

If so, answer: I AM SO PERSUADED.

Are you determined to use these Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your care and to teach nothing as essential to eternal salvation but that which is contained in and proved by the Scriptures?

If so, answer: I HAVE SO DETERMINED.

Will you then give faithful diligence to administer the sacraments, preach the doctrines of Christ, and observe and execute the Discipline of the Church as the Lord has commanded you?

If so, answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Will you be ready by all faithful diligence to disprove and banish all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word and to use both public and private admonitions as the need shall require and occasion shall be given?

If so, answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Will you be diligent in prayer and in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as are helpful to the knowledge of the same?

If so, answer: I WILL.

Will you be diligent to fashion yourself and your family according to the doctrine of Christ; and to make both yourself and them, as much as you are able, wholesome examples and patterns to the people of Christ?

If so, answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Will you, to the extent of your ability, cultivate and maintain harmony, peace, and love among all people, especially among those who are committed to your care?

If so, answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Will you reverently submit to your superiors in office, to whom is committed the charge over you, following with a ready heart and willing mind their godly counsels and admonitions?

If so, answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

May God Almighty, who has given you the desire to do all these things, grant to you ability to do them, that He may accomplish His work begun in you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Confessions of Faith:**

And now let us, the gathered congregation of God's people, all confess our faith as we join together in reciting in unison the Apostles' Creed.

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH;

AND IN JESUS CHRIST HIS ONLY SON OUR LORD;  
WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,  
BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY,  
SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE,  
WAS CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED;  
HE DESCENDED INTO HELL;  
ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD;  
HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN,  
AND SITS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER  
ALMIGHTY;  
FROM THERE HE SHALL 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.

**Ordination of Elder:**

*(The candidate and wife will kneel at the altar.)*

Receive this Bible, and with it the sacred charge to faithfully preach and teach the Word of Life.

Receive this license, granted by the National Conference of the Evangelical Congregational Church, as a further testimony of the authority of the holy office of Elder.

*Then the Bishop, or Presiding Officer, with assisting Elder, laying their hands upon the head of the candidate, the Bishop shall say:*

The Lord pour upon you the Holy Spirit for the office and work of an Elder in the Church of God, now committed to you by authority of the Church, through the imposition of our hands. Be a faithful dispenser of the Word of God, and of the Holy Sacraments; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The gospel according to Matthew tells us, “Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.’” *(Matthew 28:18-20)*

*(The Elder and his wife rise and face the congregation for the closing prayer.)*

Let us pray.

*(An extemporaneous prayer may be offered for the pastor, wife, and family or the prayer below may be used.)*

Heavenly Father, we ask You to give Your servant the riches of Your grace and the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, so that, with clearness of discernment and readiness of word, he may declare the whole counsel of God and that, the church may be encouraged and moved to maturity in godliness and that the lost be converted and gathered in the fold of Christ. Grant that in all things \_\_\_\_\_ may seek Your glory alone and the increase of Your kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Father, we ask that you bless \_\_\_\_\_ *(Candidate)* and \_\_\_\_\_ *(Candidate's wife)* today and in the days to come. We know that in ministry there are challenging times as well as seasons of great joy. Strengthen their love for each other and for you as they minister together. Fill them and us with your gracious presence and favor throughout our lives that we may glorify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**Benediction to the Church Gathered:**

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep our 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 among us and remain with us always. Amen.

*(The Elder may choose to address the congregation.)*

## CONSECRATION OF A BISHOP

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*(At the time and place appointed a Service of Worship, prior to the sermon, a hymn shall be sung, the service shall proceed as follows.)*

### **The Invocation:**

Almighty God, through your Son, Jesus Christ, you established and gifted, apostles, elders and evangelists, charging them to feed your flock. We pray your grace upon all the ministers of your Church that they may diligently preach and teach your Word, equipping and discipling those in their care to faithfully follow Jesus in obedience, joy and strength, sharing the Good News that has been planted in their hearts. Amen.

### **The Scripture Lessons:**

*(Read by a former Bishop or other designated denominational official.)*

1 Timothy 3:1-7

St. John 15:15-19

*(Then shall the Presiding Bishop address the congregation.)*

Dear friends, before you stands our brother \_\_\_\_\_, who we believe has been called by God and has been duly elected by the delegates of the Evangelical Congregational Church to serve as our Bishop. In order that you may know and hear his heart, and that he is committed to this office, we will question him as to his faith and purpose. Please pray with me.

Almighty God, giver of all good things, who by your Holy Spirit has appointed various offices in your Church; graciously behold your servant \_\_\_\_\_, now called to the Office and ministry of a Bishop. We ask that you replenish him with truth of your

doctrine, and empower him with the strength of your Holy Spirit, that both by word and deed he may faithfully serve you in this Office, to the glory of your Name and the building up and governing of your Church, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The questions (proposed by the Presiding Bishop):**

Brother \_\_\_\_\_, are you willing the Lord being your helper, to accept the Office of Bishop in the Evangelical Congregational Church?

Answer: I AM WILLING, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine which is necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? And are you determined out of the same Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge; and to teach or maintain nothing, as necessary to eternal salvation, but that which you shall be persuaded may be concluded and proved by the same?

Answer: I AM SO PERSUADED AND DETERMINED, BY GOD'S GRACE.

Will you then, faithfully exercise yourself in the Holy Scriptures, and call upon God by prayer for a true understanding of the same; so that you may be able to use the Scriptures to teach and exhort with wholesome doctrine, and to withstand the opposers of the same?

Answer: I WILL ENDEAVOR TO DO SO, BY THE HELP OF GOD.

Are you ready, with all faithful diligence, to oppose and defend the church against all erroneous and strange doctrine contrary to God's Word; and both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to do the same?

Answer: I AM READY, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Will you deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; that you may show yourself in all things an example of good works unto others?

Answer: I WILL ENDEAVOR TO DO SO, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Will you maintain and set forward, quietness, love, and peace among all people? And will you diligently live out a disciplined life as commanded in God's Word and by the principles of this denomination?

Answer: I WILL ENDEAVOR TO DO SO, BY THE HELP OF GOD.

Will you be faithful in the responsibility of administering Ordination?

Answer: I WILL SO BE, BY THE HELP OF GOD

### **The Prayer for Performance:**

May Almighty God who has called you to this office of Bishop, give you the wisdom and power to keep these vows so that he may accomplish the good work he has begun in you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*(The candidate kneels.)*

### **The Consecration:**

*The Bishops shall gather around the candidate, and if there be present any Bishops of like-minded denominations, they shall be invited to join the gathering. They shall lay their hands on the head of the candidate, and the Presiding Bishop shall say:*

The Lord pour upon you the Holy Spirit for the Office and work of a Bishop in the Evangelical Congregational Church, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*(While the candidate remains kneeling, the Senior Bishop shall offer the Prayer of Consecration.)*

Almighty God and most merciful Father. We thank you for giving to us your only Son, Jesus Christ to be our redeemer and the Author of eternal life. We thank you that after he accomplished your will through the crucifixion and resurrection, he ascended into Heaven and gave gifts to his Church, making some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers, for the building up and perfecting of his Church.

We now pray for your servant, our brother who has been called and is accepting the solemn responsibility of the office of Bishop of the Evangelical Congregational Church. As he discharges his duties as overseer, may you grant him grace to use the authority granted to him for good and not evil, for building up and not tearing down. Empower him to be a wise and faithful servant of Jesus Christ and his Church and give him joy in this labor. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

*(Then shall a Bishop Emeritus give the Charge.)*

**Charge:**

Give priority to reading and studying the Scriptures to understand the will of God and to lead us in the same. Do the work of an evangelist, always proclaiming in word and deed the Good News of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ alone. Shepherd the flock under your care, hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken-hearted, bring in the outcasts and seek the lost. Exercise discipline with intentionality and grace so that when the Chief Shepherd returns you may receive the never-fading crown of glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

*The Presiding Bishop shall pronounce the grace:*

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all evermore. Amen.

*A hymn shall be sung, chosen by the new Bishop, after which the service shall continue and may consist of the new Bishop's testimony, his charge to the people, etc.*

*At the conclusion of the entire service, the new Bishop shall pronounce the benediction.*

## COMMISSIONING OF MISSIONARIES

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*Bishop or Global Ministries Associate:*

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus: We greet you in the name of our God who purposed for the whole world to know His saving grace. In obedience to His command we meet here for this commissioning service.

As an evangelical denomination we are persuaded that God would have all people to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. We further hold that Christ's death provides atonement for the sins of the whole world. We believe that this gospel should be proclaimed to every tribe and people. You have responded to God's call upon your life to make this truth known in obedience to the Great Commission. "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation ..." (*Mark 16:15*)

We are grateful that your church has a share in this commissioning service with us today. This body of believers will be a means of strengthening you and a source of great inspiration.

*Global Ministries Associate:*

Yours is a high calling for it is a solemn responsibility to share the living Christ. The Bible tells us God appointed apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. Our exhortation to you is in the words of scripture where Paul writes, "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." (*Ephesians 4:3*)

Before the Global Ministries Community of the Evangelical Congregational Church you have declared your faith in Jesus Christ and expressed your conviction that He has called you to missionary service. This call we believe has been confirmed by your talents, by the circumstances of your call, by service in your



local church and by the judgment of the Church as expressed through the Global Ministries Community. You have given satisfactory answers concerning our Articles of Faith and your loyalty to the government and Discipline of the Evangelical Congregational Church.

Now you are asked to declare publicly your convictions by answering the following questions:

Has the love of Christ and a sincere desire to promote His glory through His gospel inspired you to seek this appointment of the Evangelical Congregational Church?

If so, answer: I HAVE BEEN INSPIRED TO DO SO.

Do you promise to be faithful in guarding yourself against all that is not in harmony with the teaching of God's Word?

If so, answer: I PROMISE TO BE FAITHFUL.

Will you strive to maintain a regular devotional life of Scripture reading and prayer believing this to be the most effective way to minister to the name of your Savior?

If so, answer: I WILL BE DEVOTED TO CHRIST IN WORD AND PRAYER.

Will you faithfully proclaim to others and practice yourself the truths of the commandments of God in accordance with the faith and doctrines of the Evangelical Congregational Church?

If so, answer: I WILL BY THE HELP OF THE LORD.

Will you be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties, both public and private, laboring cheerfully by a Christ-like life? Will you exemplify Christian love among our fellow missionaries wherever you are assigned?

If so, answer: I WILL BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

You are now to be publicly set apart in the presence of this congregation and before the throne of God for this ministry.

*(The candidates will kneel at the altar.)*

*Host Pastor:*

“While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.” (Acts 13:2-3)

*Global Ministries Associate:*

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, and by the authority vested in the Global Ministries Community of the Evangelical Congregational Church, we now by the laying on of our hands commission you a missionary of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and a fellow worker in His Church, and send you forth as God’s chosen servant. May God, the Father in Heaven, guard and keep you in His love, enrich and strengthen you with His grace, provide and care for you in every trial and need, and permit His presence to be with you as a pillar of cloud by day and pillar of fire by night. “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.” May the comfort and peace of God uphold you now and forever. Amen.

**Prayer for the Missionary while at the Altar** *(Local Chairperson):*

**Presentation of the Commissioning Certificate:**

*(The candidate(s) then proceed to the pulpit area to be presented to the congregation by the Committee on Missions Chairperson.)*

**Charge to the Congregation** *(Committee on Missions Chairperson):*

You have witnessed the commissioning of \_\_\_\_\_ for the purpose of carrying out the divine command to make Christ known around the world. We admonish you to encourage them

with fervent prayer and sacrificial giving. As this one (these) has/have dedicated himself/herself/themselves to make disciples so may you give yourselves to the same task of making Jesus Christ known. The Scriptures admonish us to “declare His glory among the nations.” (*Psalm 96:3*)

**Missionary’s Testimony:**

**Closing Hymn & Prayer:**

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**SECTION III**

**OCCASIONAL ACTS OF WORSHIP**

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## RECEPTION OF CHURCH MEMBERS

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*When at any service there are persons who, having been approved by the Official Board/Ministry Council, shall desire to unite with the Church, the officiating minister shall call the applicants forward and address them as follows:*

Dear Friends in Christ: By presenting yourself/yourselves before us today you are giving a public testimony that you are professing personal faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. We rejoice with you that by this outward act you show that you have repented of your sins and trusted in Him for forgiveness of sin, newness of life now, and hope for eternity. The moment you personally received Christ you became (a) member(s) of the Body of Christ, the Church universal (*Ephesians 2*). Now you are presenting yourself/yourselves before the Lord of the Church, and us as members of this congregation, in order to take your vows as (a) fellow-member(s) of this body of believers.

We are strengthened by hearing your public declaration of this purpose. We believe you also will be strengthened as you affirmatively answer the questions that follow:

We are a congregation affiliated with the Evangelical Congregational Church. We believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Do you believe this and that only in these Divine writings do we find the Christian message of salvation?

If so, please answer: YES, I DO BELIEVE THIS.

You have heard the scriptural teachings regarding your need of the saving acts of Jesus Christ: His perfect life, His sacrificial death, and His defeat of death by His resurrection. By presenting yourself/yourselves today in this place you are professing personal faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Is this your profession?

If so, please answer: YES, I HAVE PUT MY TRUST IN JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR AND LORD.

When the Lord gave the Church her commission, He said we should “make disciples of all nations” (*Matthew 28:19*). A disciple is one who is seeking to pattern his life on his Savior’s. Are you sincerely seeking to be a disciple and live as Jesus would have you live?

If so, answer: I AM DETERMINED, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, TO BE A DISCIPLE OF JESUS CHRIST.

The Christian is called upon to give expression of his/her gratitude for the blessings of God by returning his entire life to the Lord for His use. Will you therefore seek to faithfully accept the responsibility to use the gifts God has given you?

If so, answer: YES, I WILL.

The Bible itself, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit is our standard of Christian life and practice, and the denomination’s Discipline seeks to be a faithful interpretation of Scriptural standards of the Christian life. Are you willing to seek to live by the teachings of the Bible as the Spirit guides you, and will you seek to contribute to the harmony of the local church by following the rules of the Discipline?

If so, answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Will you seek to be faithful by attendance, and participate in public worship, fellowship, study, and service opportunities of this congregation?

If so, answer: YES, I WILL, AS GOD ENABLES ME.

Have you been baptized?

If so, answer: YES.

To all members of this congregation: Do you welcome these believers into our fellowship and care?

If so, answer: WE DO.

## CONSECRATION SERVICE FOR LOCAL CHURCH LEADERS

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*Minister:*

Dearly beloved, we meet here now in the presence of God that we may recognize His call upon those of our fellowship into leadership positions within God's church. These persons called to this responsibility of stewardship - not merely to be servants of men - but primarily to be servants of Christ. They have been duly identified for this place of responsibility and now stand ready to pledge their intent in fulfilling the duties entrusted to their care. Let us, likewise, pledge our support of them with encouraging words and prayerful remembrance.

### **Charge to the Leaders:**

*Minister:*

Beloved, this congregation has elected you to a position of leadership. We have confidence that you will prove yourselves to be a "workman that need not be ashamed." It is a great honor to be chosen to administer and supervise the work of the church. You now present yourselves in response to the call of the church to be installed into the active duties of your office. It is appropriate that you now answer the following questions:

*Minister:*

Do you willingly accept the responsibilities of the office to which you have been elected and do you promise to perform the duties of the office as diligently and effectively as possible?

If so, answer: I DO.

*Minister:*

Will you endeavor to lead an exemplary Christian life to set a proper example for others?

If so, answer: I WILL DO SO WITH THE HELP OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.



*Minister:*

Will you agree to live in harmony with the Evangelical Congregational Church Discipline?

If so, answer: I WILL DO SO WITH THE HELP OF JESUS CHRIST.

*Minister:*

Will you promote the peace, unity, and effectiveness of the church; and, in cooperation with other officers, foster the blending of all efforts to fulfilling the mission statement of this church?

If so, answer: I WILL, GOD BEING MY HELPER.

*Minister:*

Will you pray daily for your church, her pastor(s) and her lay leaders - that we may be effective in carrying out our Lord's Great Commission?

If so, answer: I WILL.

*Minister:*

Please kneel or remain standing as you are able and examine your heart asking God to reveal any weaknesses you may need to address. Also ask your heavenly Father to equip you in a marvelous way for the task that lies upon you.

*Pause for silent prayer and reflection.*

May the Almighty, who has given you the will to accept this office, also grant unto you the grace and strength to properly fulfill the duties and responsibilities required. Amen.

**Charge to the Congregation:**

*Minister:*

Members of the Body of Christ, we recognize the call of Christ, received by these members of our fellowship, as they have been selected to serve \_\_\_\_\_ Evangelical Congregational Church. God, in His sovereignty has called and graced each to their place of service. It is now our obligation to support them by our loyalty and prayers, seeking with them, and for them, consecration from on high that they may be empowered for this calling with reverence and faithfulness to the glory of God. As members and friends of \_\_\_\_\_ Evangelical Congregational Church of \_\_\_\_\_, to whose service these leaders have now pledged themselves, will you promise your loyal cooperation and prayer support in the home and the church?

If so, answer: WE WILL.

**Prayer of Dedication:**

*Minister:*

Let us pray. Almighty God, we thank You that You have called us into Your church and have given us tasks to perform. Help us to be aware that you have entrusted us with accomplishing great things for the advancement of Your kingdom on earth. Send now Your Holy Spirit upon these, Your servants who are called to leadership positions within this congregation. Endue them with heavenly wisdom that they might have the mind of Christ in the decisions they make. Help them to employ the gifts with which You have prepared them. May Your church be blessed by their service and may they find joy in serving You. Amen.

**The Commission:**

*Minister:*

In accordance with the Discipline of this church and by the authority vested in me as a minister of Jesus Christ, I hereby solemnly commission you to the high privilege of leadership in \_\_\_\_\_ Evangelical Congregational Church of \_\_\_\_\_. Go as you have been chosen. Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

**Benediction:**

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy - to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

Suggested Hymns:

A Charge to Keep I Have  
Come Christians, Join to Sing  
Come, Thou Almighty King  
Come, Ye That Love the Lord  
Faith of Our Fathers  
I Gave Myself for Thee  
Sing Praise to God Who Reigns Above  
Take My Life and Let It Be  
O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing  
Here I Am, Lord  
I am Thine, O Lord  
Living for Jesus  
O Master, Let Me Walk With Thee  
Am I a Soldier of the Cross  
I Have Decided to Follow Jesus  
All to Jesus I Surrender  
Lord, I Want to Be a Christian  
Make Me A Servant

Seek Ye First  
Spirit of the Living God

## PRESENTATION OF INFANTS

---

### **Introduction:**

We pause in this service of worship in order that a child born to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ may be presented before the Lord and this congregation. We rejoice with these parents in welcoming this precious life to their home. We believe our children are gifts from our heavenly Father, who breathes into all the breath of life so that each person is an immortal soul. You as parents have brought your child before the household of the Lord to acknowledge that this child is given as a gift and sacred trust from God, and to publicly declare your resolve to train your child in the Christian Faith.

### **Scripture:**

Since the scriptures teach the importance of obedience and guidance within the Christian family, we are certain of God's approval upon this act of presentation. In Psalm 127 it says, "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchman stays awake in vain. ... children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them."

### **Declaration of Intent:**

As parents you have been entrusted with a new life given by God. Therefore, it is your duty to lead this/these child(ren) to know and love God. Being obedient to God's will, you are to help in the unfolding of your child's spiritual life. From your example the child must learn to read and love the Bible. From your example the child must learn the way of fellowship with Christ. Above all, you are to make it your constant prayer and desire that when your child comes to the age of proper understanding he/she/them will choose of his/her/their own free will to accept and confess Christ

as Savior, and to obey Him as Lord, and to give himself/herself/themselves in loyal and loving service to the Church, which is the Body of Christ.

**Questions:**

Do you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ accept the awesome and serious responsibility with which God has entrusted you in the life of your child?

If so, answer: WE DO.

Do you promise to pray for and with \_\_\_\_\_ for his/her/their growth in the knowledge of God and development of his/her/their spiritual life?

If so, answer: WE DO.

Do you promise to train your child in body, mind and soul for service to and fellowship with God and His Church?

If so, answer: WE DO.

Do you promise to do all you can to lead \_\_\_\_\_ at an early age to confess his/her/their personal faith in Christ Jesus?

If so, answer: WE DO.

**Sponsors' Declaration (optional):**

As family and friends, you have indicated your willingness to stand with this family in their commitment to raise their child(ren) in a Christian household and Biblical worldview. Will you therefore now promise to assist these parents in carrying out their resolve, as they have declared before God and his Church today?

If so, answer: WE WILL.

**Congregational Declaration:**

To you, the members of this congregation, we present this/these child(ren) and parents. You too shall have a part in the development of their growth as a family. You must promise to do all in your power to assist these parents in showing their child true godliness by living lives which radiate the Spirit of Christ. Do you promise to provide opportunities and facilities for training and growth in the Christian life? And do you promise to assist the parents in every way to bring their child(ren) to the place where he/she/they will choose Christ as his/her/their personal Savior?

If so, answer: WE WILL.

**Dedication:**

*The pastor may now take the child in his arms or place his hand upon the head of the child in the parent's arms and declare:*

We dedicate you to God and the service of his Kingdom, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Prayer and Benediction:**

We praise you Father for the love of these parents by who you have created this new life, and that under the leading of your Holy Spirit, they have been led to present their child(ren) to you in this worship hour. We pray that your divine blessing may rest upon these parents and child(ren). Give wisdom and power, love and compassion, tenderness and firmness to these parents as they strive to fulfill the vows made this day before you and this congregation. Endue them with the heavenly power as they seek to lead their child(ren) in the ways of Scripture. Grant them the joy of seeing their child(ren) make a commitment to Christ at an early age. Amen.

## A SERVICE FOR CONFIRMATION

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*All who are to be confirmed as members of Christ's holy Church shall have been baptized and instructed in the doctrines and duties of the Christian faith.*

*Those to be confirmed shall stand before the minister, who addressing the people shall say:*

Dearly beloved the Church is of God, and will be preserved to the end of time, for the conduct of worship and the due administration of his Word and Sacraments, the maintenance of Christian fellowship and discipline, the edification of believers, and the conversion of the world. All of every age and station, stand in need of the means of grace which it alone supplies.

This person/these persons who is/are to be confirmed has/have received the Sacrament of Baptism, has/have also been instructed in the teachings of the Church, and is/are now ready to profess publicly the faith into which he/she/they was/were baptized.

*Then the minister, addressing those who are to be confirmed, shall say:*

We greatly rejoice that God the Holy Spirit has brought you to repentance of sin, and to personal faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. By presenting yourself/yourselves for Confirmation, you declare your faith, and your purpose to live the new life in Christ. That all here present may know of your profession, please respond to the following questions (*individually*).

### **The Renunciations and Profession of Faith:**

Do you renounce the devil and all his works, and reject the evil powers of this world?

Answer: I RENOUNCE THEM.



Do you renounce the empty promises and deadly deceits of this world that corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

Answer: I RENOUNCE THEM.

Do you renounce the sinful desires of the flesh that draw you from the love of God?

Answer: I RENOUNCE THEM.

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and confess him as your Lord above all earthly authorities and Savior from sin and its consequences?

Answer: I DO.

Do you joyfully receive the Christian faith, as revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and believe that the Holy Bible is the actual, authoritative Word of the one true and living God, and that therein only is proclaimed the way of salvation?

Answer: I DO.

Will you obediently keep God's holy will and commandments, and walk in them all the days of your life?

Answer: I WILL, GOD BEING MY HELPER.

Have you experienced the forgiveness of your sins through repentance and faith in Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Lord?

Answer: I HAVE.

Are you determined by the grace of God, to live the Christian life, to devote yourself to the study of God's Word and to prayer, and to be a faithful participant in the work of His kingdom?

Answer: I AM.

*The congregation is then asked to affirm their commitment to support the Candidate(s) for Confirmation in the faith.*

Will you who witness these vows encourage *(these persons)* in the faith and do all in your power to support *(these persons)* in his/her/their life in Christ?

Answer: WE WILL.

Let us join with these Candidate(s) to proclaim our faith in the words of the ancient baptismal confession, the Apostles' Creed.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

I BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST, HIS 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;  
HE DESCENDED TO THE DEAD.  
ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN;  
HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN,  
IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF THE FATHER,  
AND WILL COME AGAIN 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.

**Confirmation (Laying on of Hands):**

*The Candidates for Confirmation are invited to kneel, and the minister, laying his hands upon the head of each individual shall say:*

\_\_\_\_\_, 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.

**Vows of Church Membership:**

In the Evangelical Congregation Church the Bible itself, as interpreted by the Holy Spirit is our standard of life and practice, and the denomination's Discipline seeks to be a faithful interpretation of Scriptural standards of the Christian life. Are you willing to seek to live by the teachings of the Bible as the Spirit guides you, and will you seek to contribute to the harmony of the local church by following the rules of the Discipline?

If so, answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Will you seek to be faithful by attendance, and participate in public worship, fellowship, study, and service opportunities of this congregation?

If so, answer: YES, I WILL, AS GOD ENABLES ME.

**To Members of the Congregation:**

Do you welcome this/these believer(s) into our fellowship and care?

If so, answer: WE DO.

## THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

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*At the day and time appointed, the persons to be married shall stand together, the man on the right hand and the woman on the left, as they face the pastor.*

### **Greeting:**

*Pastor to the people:*

In the Word of God we read: “A wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding” (*John 2:1-2*).

Dear Friends, we have come together in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, to attend the uniting of this man and this woman in holy matrimony. This state is not to be entered unadvisedly or lightly, but discreetly, reverently, and in the fear of God. Forasmuch as marriage is ordained of God, it is necessary for those who enter the marriage covenant to consider with reverent mind and heart what the Word of God teaches about it.

The Lord God said: “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him” (*Genesis 2:18*).

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: “Haven’t you read, that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’?” (*Matthew 19:4-5*).

The highest goal you can have before you is spoken through the Apostle Paul: “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her,” and “the wife must respect her husband” (*Ephesians 5:25, 33b*).

**Presentation:**

*If the woman is presented in marriage, the pastor asks the presenter(s):*

Who gives this woman in marriage?

Father, or other appointed person, Answer: I DO / HER MOTHER AND I DO.

**Address to the Couple and Prayer:**

*The pastor shall address the couple and offer prayer:*

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ you are about to assume mutual relationships and responsibilities, and to pledge to each other your undying devotion and fidelity. The union into which you are now to enter is the closest and tenderest into which human beings can come. It is a union founded upon mutual understanding and love, and to Christian people it is a union in the Lord. Since marriage is God's institution, and is intended for the happiness and welfare of mankind, it is fitting that we seek His blessing upon your marriage.

Let us pray.

Our gracious and loving Heavenly Father, You have taught us that if in all our ways we acknowledge you, you will direct our paths. We come therefore to seek your guidance and blessing upon these your servants, now to be joined in the bonds of matrimony. Help each to live for the other, O God, and grant that each may enrich the other's life. Unite their hearts, we pray so that no storm of life will be able to shake their faith in each other, or in you. Be with them in sunshine or shadow, in joy or sorrow, and may their home be your abiding place, and you their constant guest, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

**Declaration of Intention by the Man and the Woman:**

*The pastor gives the following charges to the persons who are to marry:*

*The pastor shall say to the man:*

Will you \_\_\_\_\_ in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your wedded wife, to live together after God's Word in the holy state of matrimony? Will you love, honor, and cherish her, in sickness and in health, in prosperity and in adversity, and forsaking all others, cleave only unto her, so long as you both shall live?

If so answer, I WILL.

*The pastor shall say to the woman:*

Will you \_\_\_\_\_ in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, take \_\_\_\_\_ to be your wedded husband, to live together after God's Word in the holy state of matrimony? Will you love, honor, and cherish him, in sickness and in health, in prosperity and in adversity, and forsaking all others, cleave only unto him, so long as you both shall live?

If so answer, I WILL.

**Exchange of Vows:**

*The woman and man are invited to turn and face one another:*

Since you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have promised to take each other as husband and wife, please join your right hands and repeat the marriage vows in the presence of God and these witnesses.

*The pastor may prompt them, line by line:*

*Then the man shall say:*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ take you \_\_\_\_\_  
to be my wedded wife,  
to love and to cherish,

till death do us part,  
according to God's Holy Word,  
and to you do I pledge my love and devotion.

*Then the woman shall say:*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ take you \_\_\_\_\_  
to be my wedded husband,  
to love and to cherish,  
till death do us part,  
according to God's Holy Word,  
and to you do I pledge my love and devotion.

### **Blessing and Exchange of Rings:**

*The pastor shall say to the man:*

What do you give as a sign of your love and sincerity?

The man: A RING.

*Attendant places the ring in the groom's right hand, who in turn passes it in the minister's right hand.*

*The pastor shall say to the woman:*

What do you give as a sign of your love and sincerity?

The woman: A RING.

*Attendant places the ring in the bride's right hand, who in turn places it in the minister's right hand.*

*Then the minister shall say:*

Let these rings be to you both a symbol of the purity and permanence of true wedded love, and a seal of the sacred vows you have taken this day, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*To the man:*

You will place the ring on the third finger of the left hand, and repeat the following vow:

\_\_\_\_\_ receive this ring in token and pledge  
of my constant faith and abiding love,  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*To the woman:*

You will place the ring on the third finger of the left hand, and repeat the following vow:

\_\_\_\_\_ receive this ring in token and pledge  
of my constant faith and abiding love,  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**Declaration of Marriage:**

*Then the minister shall say:*

Join your right hands.

*Then shall the minister lay his right hand upon their joined hands, and say:*

Because you \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have thus consented together in holy wedlock, I therefore, in accordance with the Word of God and the laws of this commonwealth/state\*, pronounce you husband and wife together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. "What God has joined together, let man not separate" (Matthew 19:6).



**Blessing of the Marriage:**

Let us pray: *(The couple may kneel.)*

Eternal God, send your blessing upon these your servants, this man and this woman, whom we bless in your name. May they live faithfully together, sincerely perform and keep the vows and covenant between them made. Grant them grace to live according to your Word; strengthen them in constant fidelity and true affection toward each other; sustain and defend them in all trials and temptations, and help them so to pass through this world in faith toward you, in communion with your Holy Church, and in loving service one to the other, that they may forever enjoy your heavenly benediction, through Jesus Christ, your Son, Our Lord, we pray. Amen.

*The husband and wife may continue to kneel, as all pray the Lord's Prayer.*

**Benediction:**

*Then shall the pastor give the Benediction:*

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace (*Numbers 6:24-26*).

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all (*2 Corinthians 13:14*).

**Going Forth:**

*A hymn may be sung or instrumental music played as the couple, the wedding party, and the people leave.*

*\* Only Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentucky are officially commonwealths; all others are states.*

## THE FUNERAL SERVICE

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### **A Basic Service of Thanksgiving and Hope:**

*An excellent resource for the Funeral Service is “Services of Death and Resurrection,” in The United Methodist Book of Worship (1992, The United Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, TN). A rich selection of resources may also be found in the Book of Common Prayer (2019, Anglican Liturgy Press, Huntington Beach, CA). Additional resources are also available through the many pastoral/funeral manuals available through [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) or [christianbook.com](https://www.christianbook.com).*

1. *Call to Worship*
2. *Invocation*
3. *Hymn*
4. *Reading of Old Testament Scriptures*
5. *Musical presentation (if desired)*
6. *Reading of New Testament Scriptures*
7. *Thanksgiving for the Life*
8. *Response from the family (if desired)*
9. *Prayers, including the Lord’s Prayer*
10. *Hymn or musical presentation (as desired)*
11. *Meditation and challenge*
12. *Hymn*
13. *Dedication*

### **THESE RUBRICS MAY BE HELPFUL:**

- *Appropriate music prior to and following the service.*
- *Appropriate poetry may be used as desired in place of line 5.*
- *The message is an evangelistic opportunity in which persons may be invited to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior.*
- *The Apostles’ Creed or other Statement of Faith may be used following line 3.*

- *The Lord's Supper may be inserted following line 11 as desired. This would include the invitation, a prayer of consecration and the distribution of the elements.*

### **Suggested Scripture Readings for Funerals:**

#### **OLD TESTAMENT**

2 Samuel 12:16-23	Death of David's infant son
Job 19:23-27	My Redeemer lives
Proverbs 31:10-31	Portrait of a Godly woman
Ecclesiastes 3:1-15	For everything there is a season
Isaiah 35:3-10	The ransomed shall return
Isaiah 40:1-11	He shall feed His flock
Isaiah 40:27-32	They who wait for the Lord
Isaiah 65:17-25	A new heaven and a new earth
Daniel 12:1b-3	Those who are wise shall shine

#### **PSALMS**

Psalms 23	The LORD is my Shepherd
Psalms 27:1, 4-5, 13-14	Whom shall I fear?
Psalms 46	God is our refuge
Psalms 90:1-6, 10, 12-17	Teach us to number our days
Psalms 91:1-2, 9-12, 14-16	In the shadow of the Almighty
Psalms 103:1-5, 10-18	God's steadfast love
Psalms 116:1-9, 12-15	Precious is the death of his saints
Psalms 121	A new heaven and a new earth

## EPISTLE

Romans 5:1-11	While we were yet sinners
Romans 8:14-23	Joint heirs
Romans 8:31-35, 37-39	Who shall separate us?
1 Corinthians 15:51-58	O death, where is thy sting?
2 Corinthians 5:1-10	A house not made with hands
Ephesians 3:14-21	The love of Christ
Philippians 2:5-11	He emptied Himself
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	A new heaven and a new earth
Hebrews 11:32-12:2	A cloud of witnesses
1 Peter 1:3-9	Born anew to a living hope
Revelation 7:9-17	A great multitude in white robes

## GOSPEL

Mark 10:13-16	Let the children come
John 3:16-21	God so Loved the world
John 10:7-16	The Good Shepherd
John 11:17-27, 38-44	I am the resurrection
John 14:1-7, 15-21, 25-27	The way, truth and life

## The Service of Committal:

*The service of committal is not meant to be an extension, let alone a recapitulation of the funeral or memorial. Rather, it is a reminder of what has been already affirmed; hope, for the Christian, is hope grounded in Jesus' victory over death.*

*It is important to leave the sorrowing family and friends with a firm sense of closure while reassuring them once again that, for those who are in Jesus Christ, there is no final goodbye.*

*The service proposed here is in four parts:*

- 1. One or two scripture sentences*
- 2. The words of committal (which will vary according to the disposition of the body)*
- 3. A brief prayer of committal*
- 4. A benediction*

### **Suggested Scripture Sentences:**

“Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people.”  
*1 Kings 8:56a*

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.” *John 14:27*

“If the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also through His Spirit that dwells in you.” *Romans 8:11*

“God gives us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.” *1 John 5:11*

“Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in You.” *Psalms 32:22*

### **Words of Committal:**

*For earth burial:*

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified and risen,

Or

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ,

we commend to God’s merciful care our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_ ; and we commit his/her body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

“Blessed are the dead who ... die in the Lord. ... they will rest from their labors, for their deeds will follow them” (*Revelation 14:13*).

*For burial at sea:*

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified and risen,

Or

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ,

we commend to God's merciful care our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_; and we commit his/her body to the dead.

"Blessed are the dead who ... die in the Lord. ... they will rest from their labors, for their deeds will follow them" (*Revelation 14:13*).

*For cremation:*

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified and risen,

Or

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ,

we commend to God's merciful care our brother/sister \_\_\_\_\_; and we commit his/her body to be returned to the elements, ashes to ashes. (*If committal takes place in a columbarium substitute: "We commit his/her ashes to their final resting place."*)

"Blessed are the dead who ... die in the Lord. ... they will rest from their labors, for their deeds will follow them" (*Revelation 14:13*).

**Suggested Prayers:**

You sent your Son, Jesus Christ, to bring life and immortality to light. We entrust \_\_\_\_\_ to your everlasting care.

Grant us the awareness that each of our days is a true gift from you, to be lived preciously and joyously in hopeful expectation of eternal life in divine presence with those whom we love. In the name of Jesus, the Lord of life, we pray. Amen.

O LORD, support us all the day long, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then, in your mercy, grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ, our LORD. Amen.

## EXAMPLE OF A FUNERAL AND COMMITTAL SERVICE

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*The following is an example of a Funeral Liturgy created by one pastor. The service is suitable for a service within the church, especially with the inclusion of hymns, as well as the funeral home. While references to the deceased is both expected and appropriate, it needs to be emphasized that the primary purpose of the service is to focus on the promises of the Gospel which offer true hope, and comfort, and through which God imparts, through the hearing of the Gospel, the gift of faith. This is only one suggested model and it is expected that it may be adapted as each pastor feels appropriate. Interspersed through the service are brief notes of explanation.*

### **A Service of Death and Resurrection:**

#### **Greeting:**

We have come together this morning for a service of worship, remembrance, and thanksgiving.

*Note: For pastoral reasons it may be meaningful to make special reference to the significant relationships of the deceased. Mentioning persons by name is an opportunity to communicate pastoral concern for family members and to emphasize, "This service is for you."*

We come together to give thanks to God for the life of \_\_\_\_\_,  
Wife/Husband/Son/Daughter of \_\_\_\_\_,  
Mother/Father of \_\_\_\_\_,  
Brother/Sister of \_\_\_\_\_,  
Grandmother/Grandfather of \_\_\_\_\_,  
And one who professed faith in Jesus Christ as his/her Savior and Lord. (Optional when appropriate.)



We also come together to affirm our faith and to give thanks to God for the Gospel of Jesus Christ which promises the forgiveness of sins and eternal life to all who come to Christ in faith.

And we come together in Christian love to comfort one another with the comfort that we ourselves have received from God.

May God grant us grace, that in pain we may find comfort; in sorrow, hope; and in death, resurrection.

**May You Hear Through These Verses of Scripture the Comfort and Hope of the Gospel:**

*John 11:25-26*

25 Jesus said... “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, 26 and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die.”

*John 3:16-17*

16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. 17 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.”

*Matthew 11:28-30*

28 “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 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. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

**Prayer:**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who loves us with an everlasting love, and can turn the darkness of sorrow into the morning, help us to be open to your presence, grace, and love in this hour. Give us trusting and believing hearts. Speak to us of eternal things by your Spirit through Scripture and the experience of worship. Give us hope, O Lord, that we may be able to pass

safely through the valley of the shadow of death into the light of your presence. Grant us peace, through Christ, we pray. Amen.

### **Optional Element: Hymn**

*Note: In meeting with the family to plan the service it is helpful to ask if their loved one had a favorite hymn. You may consider incorporating a favorite hymn or hymns in the service either for congregational singing or included as a quotation in the sermon.*

*Note: In selecting passages of Scripture for the lessons try to include any of the favorite passages of the deceased. When reference is made to a favorite hymn or passage of Scripture it serves as a word of personal testimony of the one whose life we have gathered to remember.*

*Note: The lessons below are only examples. There are many other passages that could be selected. You will note that before each reading there is a brief introduction to the passage's main theme to help listeners grasp the Gospel expressed through the text.*

### **Old Testament Lesson**

### **Psalms 23**

*(Testifying to and inviting our confidence in God's Shepherd-like care, faithful presence, and promise of eternal life.)*

### **Epistle Lesson**

### **1 Peter 1:3-9**

*(Testifying to the Christian hope of resurrection.)*

### **Gospel Lesson**

### **John 14:1-7, 15-20, 25-27**

*(The truth of heaven, Gospel teaching on the way of salvation through faith in Christ, the peace that Christ promises to all who are his disciples.)*

### **Optional Element: An Invitation for Others to Share**

*Note: I was always open to having family members share personal remarks. I cautioned against opening a sharing time to everyone because comments shared were not always appropriate and in fact could add unnecessary length to the service as well as distract from the primary focus of proclaiming the comfort and hope of the Gospel.*

### **Optional Element: Hymn**

#### **Sermon:**

*Note: As I prepared my sermon for the service I began with what was expected, words about the deceased, but then moved to the primary focus of proclaiming Christ and the Gospel. When planning the service, I would not only inquire as to any favorite passages of Scripture or hymns but also ask for words descriptive of the deceased. I would often hear words such as loving, faithful, kind, generous, etc. I appreciated the counsel suggesting that you use one of these words to build a bridge in the message from words about the deceased to the Gospel. For example: loving - God's love; faithful - God's faithfulness; kind - God's kindness; generous - God's generosity.*

### **Closing Invitation to Faith in Christ:**

#### **Pastoral Prayer:**

Lord, we thank you for the life of \_\_\_\_\_.

We praise and thank you for the Gospel message of forgiveness, new life, and life eternal - all the gifts of your grace to be received through faith.

We pray asking for your comfort - for one another and for ourselves. Especially we pray for \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

We pray asking for ourselves and one another the gift of faith and ask that you would receive in your grace all that trust you

today for forgiveness and new life through repentance and faith. In Christ's name we pray. Amen.

### **Optional Element: Hymn**

#### **Benediction:**

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and the 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 among you, and remain with you always.

#### **Committal Service:**

*1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*

13 "But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep. 15 For this we declare to you by a word from the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. 16 For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words."

#### **Words of Committal:**

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, we commend to God's merciful care our brother/sister, \_\_\_\_\_, and we commit his/her body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

*Revelation 14:13*

“And I heard a voice from heaven saying, ‘Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ‘Blessed indeed,’ says the Spirit, ‘that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!’”

**Committal Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, you sent your Son Jesus Christ to bring life and immortality to light. We entrust \_\_\_\_\_ to your everlasting care. Grant us the awareness that each of our days is a true gift from you, to be lived precious and joyously in hopeful expectation of eternal life in divine presence with those whom we love. In the name of Jesus Christ, the Lord of life we pray. Amen.

**Optional Element: The Lord’s Prayer (Prayed in unison)**

*Note: When inviting a unison praying of the Lord’s Prayer, it is advisable to state whether you will use trespasses, debts, sins, etc. Example: “Please join with me in praying together the Lord’s Prayer, using debts and debtors.”*

**Benediction:**

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 FUNERAL OF A CHILD

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*In the following guidelines for the funeral service for a child, it is important to reassure the grieving parents, family and friends that the child has passed into the presence and care of the Gentle Shepherd whose loving arms were waiting to embrace His child and give everlasting peace. It is intended at the same time to assure the survivors of the tender mercies of God as He sustains the family through their loss and brings them to renewed joy while at the same time exhorting them to trust in the promise of eternal life through Jesus Christ and the glorious reunion that awaits them in His Heavenly Kingdom.*

*The proposed guidelines consist of elements that may be used in a more formal church service, or at a funeral home when music accompaniment is not utilized.*

### **\*Prelude:**

#### **Opening or Greeting:**

“He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart...” *Isaiah 40:11*

“Jesus said to his disciples, ‘Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.’” *John 16:22*

“The Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” *Revelation 7:17*

### **\*Hymn:**

Dear friends, we have gathered here in our grief to praise God and witness to our faith. We come together in grief, acknowledging our human loss of one so young. May God grant us grace, that in pain we may find comfort; in sorrow, hope; in death, resurrection as we celebrate the life of \_\_\_\_\_ who was given life on

\_\_\_\_\_ and called to with his/her Heavenly Father on \_\_\_\_\_.

Gentle God, born an infant in Jesus Christ in the family of Joseph and Mary, we give you thanks for \_\_\_\_\_ born among us full of hope and promise. We remember that Jesus Christ lifted children into loving arms to embrace and bless them. We ask you to embrace and bless \_\_\_\_\_ as part of your heavenly family where, by your grace, our lives are brought to fullness in the peace of your eternal home. We ask this through Jesus Christ, your beloved child, and our risen Savior. Amen.

### **Comments and Sharing:**

#### **Prayer:**

O God, whose dear Son took little children into his arms and blessed them; give us grace, we pray, to entrust this child to your never-failing love and care; and bring us all to your eternal life; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, we pray that you will keep in your tender love the life of this child whom we hold in blessed memory. Help us who continue here to serve you with constancy, trusting in your promise of eternal life, that hereafter we may be united with your blessed children in glory everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of all mercies, whose heart aches with our human hurting, we commend to your love the parent(s) of this child, \_\_\_\_\_ and all his/her/their children who mourn. Sustain the family in this loss and in their loneliness. Kindle anew the ashes of joy. Grant the peace of knowing that this child is with you both in this life and in the life that is to come; through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

## **Scripture:**

### **Old Testament**

2 Samuel 12:16-23

Isaiah 40:1-11

Zechariah 8:1-8

Ecclesiastes 3:1-15

Isaiah 65:17-25

### **Psalms**

Psalms 23

Psalms 130:1-17

Psalms 130

### **Gospels**

Matthew 18:1-5

Mark 10:13-16

John 14:1-6

Matthew 10-14

Luke 18:15-17

### **Epistles**

Romans 8:14-23

Revelation 7:15-17

1 Corinthians 1:3-7

## **Message of Comfort:**

### **\*Hymn:**

### **Committal:**

O God, you are the source of all mercy and the giver of all comfort. Deal graciously with all who mourn the death of your little lamb. Assure us with the knowledge that children are precious to our Savior, Jesus, who sought out the children and blessed them, telling his disciples "to such as these the kingdom of God belongs." Help us to entrust our beloved \_\_\_\_\_ to the everlasting care of the Good Shepherd. Console us and grant us peace as we seek to accept such a profound loss. May we trust in your goodness, knowing that now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now we know only in part; then we will know fully, even as we have been fully known by you. Enable



us to go forward with confidence that we will be joined together again in the joy of your heavenly kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

In your infinite wisdom and love, our heavenly Father, you have received unto yourself this little child. We therefore tenderly commit the precious body to its resting place in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Benediction:**

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

The God of all grace who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To Him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Go in peace, remembering Jesus' words to his beloved disciples: "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. And I will pray (to) the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever."

**Appropriate Hymns:**

What a Friend We Have in Jesus  
Jesus Loves Me  
Children of the Heavenly Father

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*\* When service is held in a church (or when organ or other accompaniment is available).*

## THE FUNERAL OF A NON-BELIEVER

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### **Prelude:**

### **Call to Worship:**

Deuteronomy 33:27

Psalm 34:18

Psalm 147:3, 5

### **Invocation:**

### **Scripture Reading:**

Psalm 24

Psalm 89

Psalm 119

Psalm 142

Ecclesiastes 3

Romans 10

Philippians 4:6-13

### **Obituary Information and Family and Friends Comments:**

### **Meditation:**

*Funerals are for the living rather than for the dead. In the case of one who does not profess to be a Christian the minister should avoid the extreme of condemning the deceased to eternal punishment or preaching the deceased into heaven. He must avoid judging the heart as well as giving false hope. The Good News of the Gospel can be faithfully presented without saying that the promised blessings necessarily apply to the deceased.*

*The meditation could be as simple and powerful as sharing the Christian hope as outlined in Steps to Peace with God by Billy Graham. A simple presentation of the basics of the Christian hope: (1) God's Idea: Peace and Life Forever; (2) Our Problem: Sin gets in the way; (3) God's Answer: The Cross; and (4) Our Part: Accept Christ.*

*The funeral service is a unique opportunity to speak to the living about their imminent death. It is not a question of will they*

*die – it is only a question of when they will die. While we can't do anything for the dead, we can minister to the living by sharing with them a positive message of the Christian hope which depends upon a personal relationship to the Lord Jesus Christ.*

**Pastoral Prayer:**

**Hymn or Special Music:**

**Benediction:**

## A SERVICE OF HEALING

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*The service of healing may become a corporate worship experience in which those who are ministering become conduits of God's love and grace. Healing precedes from the presence of God among us. The service of healing is not intended to replace medical care, surgery, mental health treatment, or any other accepted forms of healthcare; but recognizing that God works through many of these channels, the service is intended to be part of a total health care regime. It should be noted that the service of healing is not intended to be a guarantee of complete physical restoration, although that may happen; the purpose is to acknowledge God's presence with us in our suffering and His ability to heal if it is His will. Since it is hoped that all who feel their need of the Lord's healing mercy will participate, it is suggested that church leaders/elders participate in accordance with James 5:14, "Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." It is also appropriate to include the Lord's Supper in a healing service. This particular service is designed so it may include either anointing with oil or the laying on of hands.*

### **Opening Prayer:**

Eternal and everlasting heavenly Father, we recognize you as the One who forgives all of our sins and heals all of our diseases. You are the One who knit us together in our mother's womb and you can cure our soul and body of every affliction. We pray that you would show forth Your grace and power upon those in need today of your healing mercy. For we believe the healing touch of Jesus is just as real today as when He walked upon the earth. May Your compassion and mercy show forth in what transpires here today. Be glorified in Jesus, in whose name we pray. Amen.

*Pastor:*

Throughout the pages of Scripture we witness the mystery of spiritual healing. The root of the Greek word interpreted “healing” in the New Testament, *sozo*, is the same root as the words for salvation and wholeness. God offers wholeness of body, mind, and spirit through His healing touch. Through our praise, confession, and worship, we acknowledge God’s willingness to provide salvation and wholeness for the people He loves.

**Affirmation of Faith** (To be led by a church leader/elder):

“Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise” (*James 5:13*). “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name” (*Psalms 103:1*)! May we unite our hearts and voices in praise as together we affirm our faith using the words of the Apostles’ Creed.

*Traditional:*

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH;  
AND IN JESUS CHRIST, HIS ONLY SON, OUR LORD,  
WHO WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,  
BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY;  
SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE,  
WAS CRUCIFIED, DEAD, AND BURIED;  
THAT HE DESCENDED INTO HADES,  
THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD;  
HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN,  
AND SITTETH AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, THE FATHER  
ALMIGHTY;  
FROM THENCE HE SHALL COME TO JUDGE THE QUICK 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.

*Alternative:*

I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
THE CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.  
AND IN JESUS CHRIST, HIS 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.  
HE DESCENDED TO THE DEAD.  
ON THE THIRD DAY HE ROSE AGAIN FROM THE DEAD.  
HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN,  
AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD THE FATHER  
ALMIGHTY,  
FROM WHENCE HE SHALL 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.

*\* “catholic” refers to the universal church of God’s people  
throughout all time and from all places.*

**Prayer of Confession** (To be led by a church leader/elder):

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock  
and it will be opened to you” (*Matthew 7:7*). Friends, God knows  
our needs before we ask, but the act of asking prepares us to  
receive His gift of grace. We read in Holy Scripture, the book of  
James, that confession is an integral part of healing. We read in  
James 5:16: “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray  
for one another, that you may be healed.” As we come to this time

of confession, let us remove every barrier that stands between God and ourselves. Take to heart God's promise recorded in 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

**The following Prayer of Confession may be Prayed in Unison:**

Heavenly Father, you are our rock and hiding place. You have provided your work of redemption, while we were still lost in rebellion against you. We thank You for your compassion and the unconditional love you provide for your children. Cleanse our lives now from all unrighteousness and grant us your gift of healing for our body, mind, and soul. Amen.

*At this point the service could continue with either the Laying on of Hands or Anointing. Olive oil is the oil traditionally used in anointing.*

*Pastor:*

Will those who desire to receive the laying on of hands and/or anointing please come forward at this time? Please be united in prayer for those seeking God's touch.

**Laying on of Hands:**

*Pastor:*

The Laying on of Hands illustrates the power of touch which accompanied many of the healings depicted for us in the New Testament. In the case of lepers or other outcasts, the touch of Jesus was probably almost as welcome as the healing the touch provided. The touch in the Laying on of Hands is a tangible expression of the presence of the healing Christ, working in and through those who minister in His name.

*(Pronounce the individual name of each candidate upon which hands are to be laid.)*

We lay our hands upon you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. May God grant you forgiveness for your sins; may He release you from the pain of suffering; may He restore you to wholeness in mind, body and soul; and may His Holy Spirit abide and comfort you through all adversity. *(The individual's personal need may also be addressed at this time if they wish to state it.)* We humbly request this in the name of our Lord who healed all the afflicted. Amen.

### **Anointing:**

*Pastor:*

Anointing with oil is a sign invoking the power of God for the purpose of healing. Throughout scripture, oil is representative of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The oil points beyond itself and those ministering through the anointing to the action of the Holy Spirit and the presence of God's anointed One, Jesus Christ.

*(Pronounce the individual name of each candidate as the oil is applied. The oil may be dabbed on the forehead or it may be applied in the sign of the cross.)*

We anoint you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. May God grant you forgiveness for your sins; may He release you from the pain of suffering; may He restore you to wholeness in mind, body and soul; and may His Holy Spirit abide and comfort you through all adversity. *(The individual's personal need may also be addressed at this time if they wish to state it.)* We humbly request this in the name of our Lord who healed all the afflicted. Amen.

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving:**

Our compassionate and merciful Heavenly Father, we recognize you as the source from whom all healing flows. We thank you for the gift of your Son, without whom salvation and complete healing would be impossible. We also thank you for the privilege of being used, as your disciples, to continue the healing



ministry you instituted on earth. Thank you for your gift of precious life on this earth and eternal life when we leave this world. Amen.

### **Additional Resources:**

#### **Suggested Scripture Passages:**

1 Kings 17:17-24	Matthew 8:1-13	Luke 8:43-48
2 Kings 5:9-14	Matthew 10:1-8	Luke 17:11-17
Psalms 13	Matthew 15:21-28	John 5:1-9
Psalms 23	Mark 1:21-28	John 5:2-18
Psalms 30	Mark 1:29-34a	John 9:1-11
Psalms 103:1-13	Mark 5:1-20	Acts 3:1-10
Psalms 139:1-17	Mark 5:21-43	Acts 5:12-16
Isaiah 35:1-10	Luke 5:17-26	2 Corinthians 1:3-5
Isaiah 40:28-31	Luke 7:11-17	James 5:13-16

#### **Hymns:**

Come, Holy Spirit	Only Believe
Something Beautiful	If My People
Jesus, Lover of My Soul	Moment by Moment
Victory in Jesus	Where Cross the Crowded
He Touched Me	How Sweet the Name of Jesus
	Sounds
Jesus I Come	Praise My Soul the King of
	Heaven
Praise to the Lord the Almighty	Have Thine Own Way, Lord
Sing Praise to God Who Reigns	O God, Our Help in Ages Past
Above	
Wonderful, Merciful Savior	Great is Thy Faithfulness
Children of the Heavenly Father	There's a Wideness in God's
	Mercy
It Is Well With My Soul	What a Friend We Have in Jesus
Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us	Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus
I Need Thee Every Hour	God Will Take Care of You
Near to the Heart of God	The Lord's My Shepherd, I'll Not
	Want

**Worship Songs:**

Miracles - Jesus Culture or Kari Jobe  
Rapha - Stephen McWhirter & Jason Clayborn  
Healer - Kari Jobe  
Same God - Elevation Worship  
Our God - Chris Tomlin  
Your Great Name - Natalie Grant  
I Speak Jesus - Charity Gayle  
In Jesus Name (God of Possible) - Katy Nichole  
Your Nature - Kari Jobe  
Praise you in this Storm - Casting Crowns  
Be Still my Soul (In You I Rest) - Kari Jobe  
More Than Able - Elevation Worship  
Resurrecting - Elevation Worship  
Not For a Moment (After All) - Vertical Worship or Meredith Andrews  
Hands of the Healer - Hope Darst  
Miracle in Me - Red Rocks Worship  
Yet Not I But through Christ in Me - CityAlight

## A SERVICE OF PRAYER FOR HEALING WITH HOLY COMMUNION

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*This service was developed for use at St. Paul's Evangelical Congregational Church, Rothsville, PA, as a Service of Prayer for Healing in the setting of a Service of Holy Communion. In "A Service of Healing," which begins on page 90 of the Pastor's Book of Services, you will find listings of suggested Scripture, hymns, and worship songs appropriate for services of healing.*

### **Greeting:**

May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. (2 Peter 1:2)

We have come to lift up our brothers and sisters before the Lord that they might receive healing. Let those who seek God's healing open their hearts to the Spirit of the Lord.

### **Let us Bless the Lord through Psalm:**

*Leader:* Bless the Lord, O my soul!

*Congregation:* AND ALL THAT IS WITHIN ME, BLESS HIS HOLY NAME!

*Leader:* Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.

*Congregation:* THE LORD FORGIVES ALL OUR INIQUITY, AND HEALS ALL OUR DISEASES.

*Leader:* The Lord redeems our lives from the pit, and crowns us with steadfast love and mercy.

*Congregation:* GOD SATISFIES US WITH GOOD AS LONG AS WE LIVE SO THAT OUR YOUTH IS RENEWED LIKE THE EAGLE'S.

### **\*Hymn of Praise: "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing"**

**\*Prayer:**

Almighty and everlasting God, who can banish all affliction both of soul and of body, show forth your power upon those in need, that by your mercy they may be restored to serve you afresh in holiness of living, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**The Word of God:**

Psalms 88; Isaiah 35:1-10; Matthew 8:14-17

*MEDITATION on Scripture***Confession and Pardon:**

Call to Confession (*James 5:14-16*)

*Silent Prayer*

*Pastor:* Hear the good news: Christ died for us while we were yet sinners; that proves God's love toward us. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

*Congregation:* IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST, WE ARE FORGIVEN. GLORY TO GOD. AMEN.

**Holy Communion:**

*Pastor:* The Lord be with you.

*Congregation:* AND ALSO WITH YOU.

*Pastor:* Lift up your hearts.

*Congregation:* WE LIFT THEM UP TO THE LORD.

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

*Congregation:* IT IS RIGHT TO GIVE OUR THANKS AND PRAISE.

*Pastor:* It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. In the beginning, when darkness covered the face of the earth and nothing existed but chaos, your Spirit swept across the waters. You spoke but a word, and light was separated from darkness. And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

*Congregation:* HOLY, HOLY, HOLY LORD, GOD OF POWER AND MIGHT, HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE FULL OF YOUR GLORY. HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST. BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST.

*Pastor:* Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ: who lived among us and knew human pain and suffering; who called all who were burdened and heavy laden and gave them rest; who healed the sick, fed the hungry, and ate with sinners; who cast out demons and showed us the way to you through faith; who took our suffering upon himself, that we might be cleansed of our sins and receive eternal life. 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 the Spirit. On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he 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 he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from 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:

*Congregation:* CHRIST HAS DIED; CHRIST IS RISEN; CHRIST WILL COME AGAIN.

*Pastor:* 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 the same Spirit heal us in body, mind, and spirit, cleansing away all that would separate us from you. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in 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 Father, now and for ever.

*Congregation:* AMEN.

*Pastor:* The body of Christ, given for you.

*Congregation:* AMEN.

*Pastor:* The blood of Christ, given for you.

*Congregation:* AMEN.

*The Bread and Cup received.*

### **Prayers for Healing:**

*Pastor:* Almighty God, your Son, Jesus Christ healed many as a sign that your reign has come near. As his disciples we are called to continue his ministry of healing and reconciliation with prayer, the laying on of hands and anointing. Now in prayer we entrust to you, in the name of Christ, all those who are in need of healing and reconciliation. God of the Nations, we ask for the healing of all strife in the world between nations, communities and individuals that all peoples may walk in your ways of righteousness and live in your peace. In your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* Strong and abiding God, give comfort to those who suffer, grant relief, grant refreshment; in your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* Heavenly Father, have mercy on all your children who live in mental distress. Restore them to strength of mind and cheerfulness of spirit; in your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* Merciful God, you do not willingly afflict or grieve your children, Look with pity on the sorrows of your children. Remember your children with mercy, strengthen them with patience and comfort them with memories of your goodness; in your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* God of Power, grant that all those who suffer illness feel the help of your power that sickness may turn to health and sorrow into joy; in your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* Patient God, look with compassion upon all who through addiction have lost their health and freedom. Remove their fears and strengthen their recovery. For those who care for them grant understanding and persevering love; in your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* Ageless God, for those increasing in years and infirmities we ask for homes of dignity and peace, helpers and a willingness to accept help. Increase their faith and assurance of your love; in your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we pray for families. Grant that all in families will come to truly be brothers and sisters with Jesus Christ, following his example of truth and love. May our families become safe harbors. May the love of God and love for one another guide their lives; in your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* Eternal God, as we have gathered in this time and place, we remember all those who are in need of your healing touch. We offer those names and petitions both with our lips and with the sighs of hearts that are too deep for words. We remember especially ...; in your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* God of Heaven and Earth, we remember before you all our dearly departed. Keep us in union with them through faith and love toward you, that in the fullness of your time we may enter into your kingdom where all tears will be wiped away and all sorrow will turn to joy; in your great mercy,

*Congregation:* HEAR US, O GOD.

*Pastor:* Generous God, we offer our thanks and praise to the God who listens when we call out. Grant us grace to trust your mercy for all for whom we pray.

*Congregation:* AMEN.

### **Hymn of Praise: “Spirit of the Living God”**

#### **Consecration of Oil:**

*Pastor:* O God, the giver of health and salvation, we give thanks to you for the gift of oil. As your holy apostles anointed many who were sick and healed them, so pour out your Holy Spirit on us and on this gift, that those who in faith and repentance receive this anointing may be made whole; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Congregation:* AMEN.

#### **Prayers for Healing and Wholeness with Anointing and/or Laying on of Hands:**

*Everyone is invited to come forward individually or as a group to the communion rail and express any specific concerns they may have. As anyone comes, he or she will be invited to express the concerns of the heart or body to the pastor or designated person. In response, the following will occur:*

\_\_\_\_\_, these hands are laid upon you in the name of Jesus, the Christ, your Savior and Healer.

May the power of God's indwelling presence heal you of all illnesses - of body, mind, spirit, and relationships - that you may serve God with a loving heart. AMEN.

#### **Prayer:**

Almighty God, we pray that our brothers and sisters may be comforted in their suffering and made whole.

When they are afraid, give them courage;  
when they feel weak, grant them your strength;  
when they are afflicted, afford them patience;  
when they are lost, offer them hope;



when they are alone, move us to their side;  
when death comes, open your arms to receive Your servant.  
In the name of Jesus Christ we pray. AMEN.

**Sharing of Thanksgivings:**

Persons who feel so led may give thanks for healing or other blessings.

**\*Hymn of Praise: “Praise the One Who Breaks the Darkness”**

**\*Dismissal with Blessing:**

*Pastor:* The Lord who heals all your iniquity bless and keep you;  
the face of the Lord who heals all your afflictions shine upon you  
and be gracious to you; the light of the countenance of the Lord  
who redeems your life be lifted upon you and give you peace.  
AMEN.

## RECOMMENDED WORSHIP RESOURCES

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**The Book of Common Prayer (2019)** (The Anglican Church in North America; Anglican Liturgy Press; Huntington Beach, CA, 2019)

*Resources for Holy Communion, Marriage, Confirmation, Collects for the Christian Year, Lectionaries, a major section on Occasional Prayers which can be incorporated into services as unison prayers or into the pastoral prayer.*

**Our Great Redeemer's Praise: Hymns and Responsive Readings Arranged According to the Apostles' Creed** (Seedbed; Franklin, TN; 2022)

*A hymnal whose contents are arranged according to the Apostles' Creed. The hymnal includes both traditional hymns (close to 100 hymns of Charles Wesley) and contemporary hymns and worship songs (by contemporary composers such as Stuart Townsend, Chris Tomlin, Keith and Kristin Getty). The hymnal includes services of Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, the Wesley Covenant Service, and a "Selected Psalter: A Collection of Metrical Psalms for Singing."*

**The United Methodist Book of Worship** (The United Methodist Publishing House, Nashville, TN, 1992)

*Resources for services of Holy Communion, Baptism, Marriage, and Funerals, as well as resources for the seasons of the Christian Year (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.), General Acts of Worship (Greetings, Prayers of Confession, Assurance, and Pardon).*

**The Worship Sourcebook** (CRC Publications, Grand Rapids, MI, 2004)

*Part 1 "Elements of the Worship Service," (Opening of Worship, Confession and Assurance, Proclaiming the Word, Prayers of the People, Offering, Baptism, Professions of Faith, the Lord's Supper, Closing of Worship); and Part 2 "Central Themes of the Christian Faith" providing resources for the Christian year.*

## RECOMMENDED READING

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Carson, D. A. ed. 2002. Worship by the Book. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Chan, Simon. 2006. Liturgical Theology: The Church as Worshipping Community. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Chapel, Bryan. 2009. Christ Centered Worship: Letting the Gospel Shape Our Practice. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.

Davis, John Jefferson. 2010. Worship and the Reality of God: An Evangelical Theology of Real Presence. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Dawn, Marva J. 1995. Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans.

Kauflin, Bob. 2008. Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God. Wheaton, IL: Crossway.

Webber, Robert E. Ed. 1993. The Complete Library of Christian Worship, Vol. 3, The Renewal of Sunday Worship. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.

Webber, Robert E. 2008. Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming and Enacting God's Narrative. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker.