

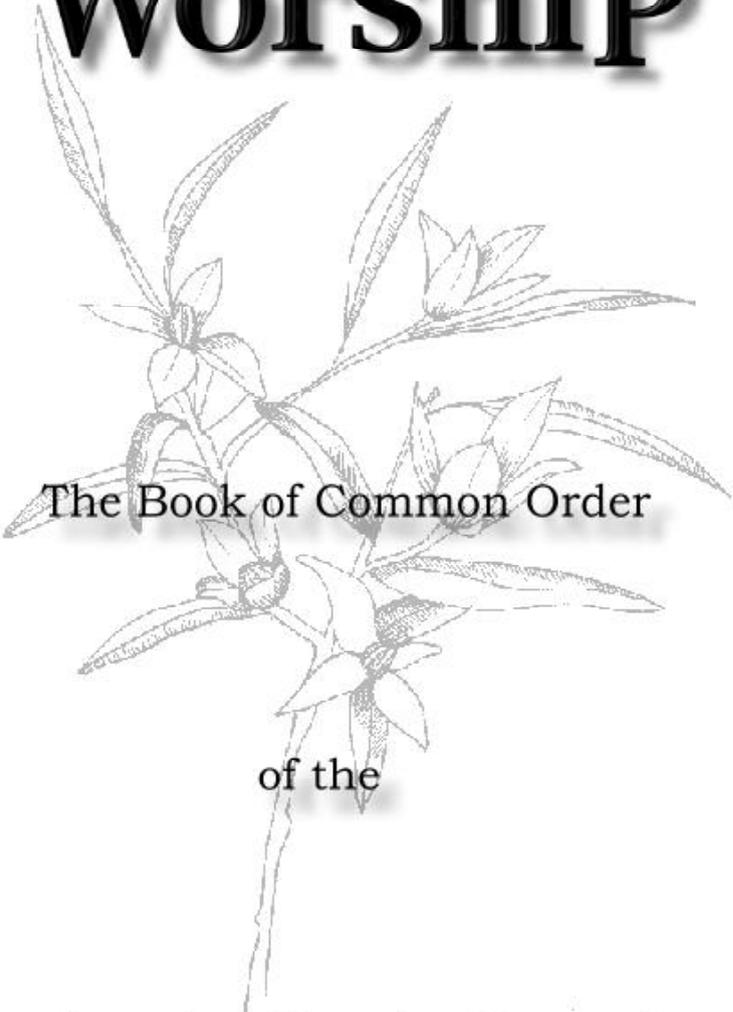


WORSHIP

The Lord's Prayer

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

Worship



The Book of Common Order

of the

Presbyterian Church of Australia

Worship

The Book of Common Order
of the Presbyterian Church of Australia
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Preface

Over a period of many years the Presbyterian Church has, through its Assemblies used various books of Common Order, mostly based on the Church of Scotland's orders of service. Various Assemblies authorised the appropriate committee dealing with worship to provide suitable orders of service for use as a guide within our Church.

The Assembly in 1965 proclaimed the edition of the Book of Common Order as presented to that Assembly as the basis for Presbyterian worship in Australia. Later, in 1969 the Public Worship Committee was instructed to provide a series of provisional services for use in the Church. A small booklet was published subsequently and received some recognition.

A new Book of Common Order was not proceeded with until the Assembly in 1979 declared: "Request the Committee to begin a revision of The Book of Common Order of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, first published in 1920 and revised in 1929, and to make available in draft form, services produced from time to time."

The Committee provided a booklet of services which was studied by the whole Church through its Presbyteries. The Committee then, in the light of the comments and suggestions made, proceeded with its work. The 1985 Assembly declared: "Request the Committee, a) to continue its work on the preparation of the Book of Common Order, b) to provide from time to time provisional services for use and study within the church, c) endeavour to finalise the production of the Book of Common Order for presentation to the next General Assembly of Australia."

The 1991 General Assembly referred the provisional book of Common Order, known as "Worship!" back to the Public Worship and Aids to Devotion Committee for complete revision. In 1997 the General Assembly authorised the publication of Worship – the Book of Common Order of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

This present Book is the result of several revisions since then, which we believe are in accordance with the doctrine and Standards of the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

The Committee expresses the hope that this Book of Common Order will prove to be an asset to all those responsible for conducting worship and that the worship of God will be always inspiring and worthy of the Lord.

The services in this book are not mandatory, but set a standard of the kind of services the Assembly commends.

P.F. Cooper, Convener.
October 1998

The Purpose

- * To glorify God and Christ the Lord of the Church.
- * To provide some measure of uniformity within the Church regarding the practice of the Worship of God.
- * To act as a guide to all responsible for the conduct of worship.
- * To set a standard of the kind of services the Assembly commends as an expression of the purity of worship practiced in this Church.
- * To allow God's people to receive adequate and proper guidance for the conduct of worship.

Acknowledgements

The Committee acknowledges its debt to:

- * the various Books of Common Order which have been in general use in the Church throughout the years;
- * the work, dedication and prayerful assistance of a number of people who have given of their knowledge, expertise and time to this task;
- * the International Consultation on English Texts (I.C.E.T.);

- * the New International Version of the Bible which is the Bible text used unless otherwise indicated.
- * Church of Scotland, for adaptations from the Book of Common Order, 1979;

The Committee trusts that there has been no infringement of copyright.

Special Note

The questions required to be asked at the various services are set by the General Assembly itself in regard to the following:

- * Ordination and/or Induction of Ministers
- * Ordination and/or Induction of Elders
- * Licensing of Candidates for the Ministry

The questions proposed in this Book of Common Order, other than those listed above, are suggestions.

AN ORDER FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

(Where the Lord's Supper is not celebrated)

Approaching God

The minister/leader greets the people and/or reads Scriptural sentences calling the people to worship.

The people sing a psalm or hymn of praise

The prayers of approach: Adoration, Confession and the assurance of pardon.

Hearing The Word of God

The reader says:

Hear the Word of God as it is written in

Old Testament reading.

The reader concludes:

This is the Word of the Lord.

A children's address.

A psalm or hymn.

The reader says:

Hear the Word of God as it is written in

New Testament reading.

The reader concludes:

This is the Word of the Lord.

Prayer for understanding of the preached Word.

The preaching of the Word of God.

Responding To The Word of God

A psalm or hymn.

A Creed or Scriptural Statement.

Offering/collection.

Prayers of response: Thanksgiving and Intercession.

The Lord's Prayer (optional).

A psalm or hymn.

A blessing (said or sung).

Notes:

1. An anthem and/or solo may be sung at an appropriate point in the service.
2. Baptism is appropriately administered following the Creed or Scriptural Statement.
3. Where the Lord's Supper is celebrated, the prayer of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer occur later in the service.

A SECOND ORDER FOR THE WORSHIP OF GOD

(Where the Lord's Supper is not celebrated)

The minister/leader greets the people and/or reads scriptural sentences calling the people to worship.

Scripture sentences.

The prayers of approach: Adoration, Confession and the assurance of pardon.

Old Testament reading.

A children's address.

A psalm or hymn.

New Testament reading.

Offering/collection.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Intercession.

Lord's Prayer (optional).

A hymn.

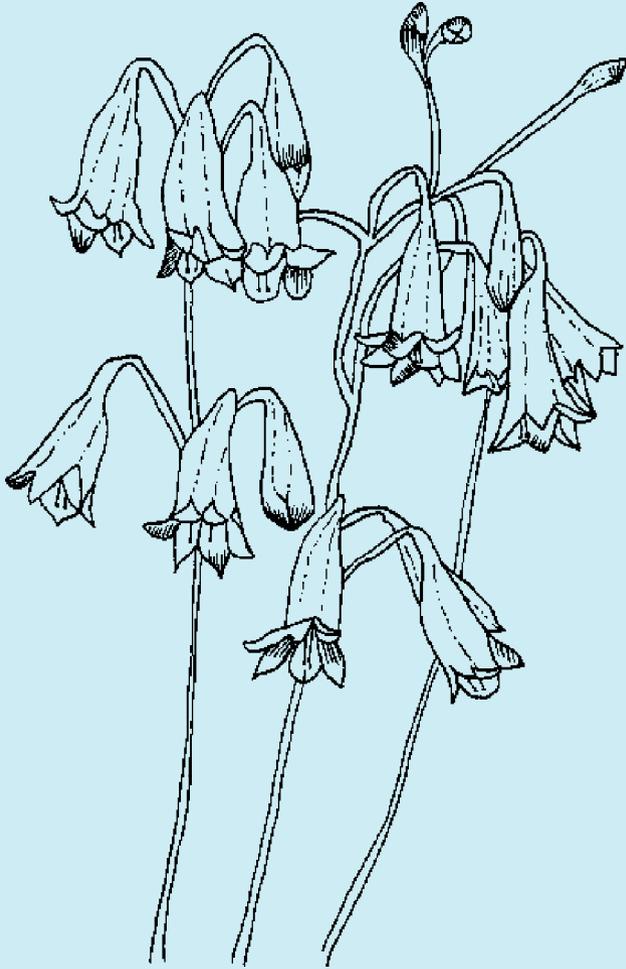
Prayer for understanding the preached word.

Sermon.

A hymn.

A blessing (said or sung).

Baptism



Christmas Bell (Blandfordia cunninghamii)

BAPTISM OF THE CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS - FIRST ORDER

(To be conducted during the regular Sunday Service)

The minister may begin with the following sentences:

From everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear Him, and His righteousness with their children's children. Our help is in the name of the Lord who made heaven and earth. (Psalm 103:17, Psalm 124:8)

Then he shall say:

The Lord Jesus Christ commanded that his disciples should be baptised.

He said:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising 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 Old Testament prophets spoke of our need for spiritual cleansing and renewal by the Holy Spirit:

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. You will be my people, and I will be your God. (Ezekiel 36:25-28)

This sacrament is a sign and seal of the grace of God and of our washing and renewal by the Holy Spirit; it signifies our union with Christ and the washing away of our sins; it is a mark of our adoption into God's family and our resurrection to everlasting life. Through it we are admitted into the visible Church and are committed to serve Christ as Lord. Even children too young to understand these things share in the promise. In receiving

Baptism of the Children of Believers - First Order

this sacrament we acknowledge that, through God's promise to believing parents, this child is part of the family of God. We are given this assurance by the apostle Peter when he declared:

The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call. (Acts 2:39)

The Gospel also confirms the willingness of Christ to receive our children:

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. (Mark 10:13-16)

Because the practice of the baptism of infants rests on God's covenant of grace with believers and their children, it requires personal faith in Jesus Christ on the part of the parents. Therefore it is necessary for those presenting their children for baptism to answer certain questions.

The minister shall then say to the parents who shall stand:

Who is your Lord and Saviour?

Response: **Jesus Christ is my Lord and Saviour.**

Do you trust in the righteousness of Christ alone for your salvation?

Response: **I do.**

Do you promise to obey him.

Response: **I do.**

Our Lord Jesus has commanded us to teach those whom we baptise in His name. Do you promise to teach N..... from the Scriptures how to trust in Christ as *his* Saviour and to follow him as Lord?

Baptism of the Children of Believers - First Order

Response: I do.

Do you promise to pray for N....., and to set *him* a godly example in your actions, that, by God's grace, *he* may be a faithful follower of our Lord Jesus Christ all *his* days?

Response: I do.

As part of your godly example, do you promise to be regular and diligent in meeting with God's people on the Lord's Day?

Response: I do.

Then the minister shall say:

The Lord bless you and your child and graciously enable you to keep these promises.

Then, addressing the congregation, he shall say:

This sacrament lays special responsibilities upon you, the people of God. Will you be faithful to your calling as members of the Church of Christ, so that, by God's grace, this child may grow up in the knowledge and love of Christ?

If you accept this responsibility, please say: I will.

Then the minister shall pour or sprinkle water on the child's head, saying:

N....., I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, descend upon you and dwell in your heart forever.

The minister may then say, or the congregation sing:

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. (*Rejoice!* 352)
(Numbers 6:24-27)

Thereafter addressing the congregation, the minister shall say:

We receive N..... into the care of Christ's Church, that as a member of the covenant community, *he* may be nurtured and strengthened, and continue as Christ's faithful servant to *his* life's end.

The minister then says:

The Lord be with you as you fulfil this solemn trust, and may he abundantly fulfil in you his word:

Whoever welcomes this little child in my name receives me.
(Luke 9:48)

Let us pray:

Almighty and eternal God, who keeps covenant and shows mercy to a thousand generations of those who love and obey you, we thank you for the sign of baptism which assures us that you are our God, and that you wash away our sins and renew our hearts by your Spirit.

As you have rescued us from the kingdom of darkness, and brought us into the kingdom of your dear Son, we pray that you may be pleased by your Spirit to bring N..... to an understanding of your gift of new life.

We ask that the fruit of the Spirit's presence may appear in *his* life and that you will help *him* to honour you as *his* heavenly Father and Jesus Christ as *his* Saviour.

Preserve *him* by your power against all the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil.

Be *his* refuge and fortress in all the trials of life. Give *him* strength to live the Christian life faithfully to the end. We ask that *his* name will be found in the Lamb's Book of Life, so that when *he* stands before you in glory, *he* will not be ashamed.

We pray that you will bless N.....'s home.

Help *his* parents to bring *him* up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Baptism of the Children of Believers - First Order

May N..... be the means of drawing them still closer to you and to each other. And, Father, we pray that after this life is ended, we may all be brought to the everlasting joys of our heavenly home where your Son, our Lord Jesus, lives and reigns eternally. Amen.

(The parents with the child return to their seats)

BAPTISM OF THE CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS - SECOND ORDER

(to be celebrated during Sunday Service)

An appropriate hymn or psalm may be sung.

During the singing, the minister comes to the font, together with the parents of the child (father carrying the child).

The minister says:

In Matthew's Gospel, we read how the risen Lord came to his disciples and said:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising 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 New Testament also teaches us that Baptism is the sign and seal of the covenant of grace, God's promise to forgive our sins and renew us by the Spirit, for Peter proclaimed:

Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call. (Acts 2:38,39)

Members of the church:

We ourselves trusted Christ for our salvation; we ourselves were baptised. As we remember these facts, we rejoice in the help that a physical sign and seal like baptism can be to our faith.

Still today, the water of Baptism is the sign of God's promise of spiritual washing and forgiveness, of a new birth into eternal life, and of the Holy Spirit continually refreshing us.

The minister shall then say to the parents:

Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

Response: I do.

Do you trust in the righteousness of Christ alone for your salvation?

Response: I do.

Our Lord Jesus has commanded us to teach those whom we baptise in his name. Do you promise to teach N..... from the Scriptures how to trust in Christ as *his* Saviour, to pray for *him*, and to set *him* a godly example in your actions, that, by God's grace, *he* may be a faithful follower of our Lord Jesus Christ all *his* days?

Response: I do.

Then the minister shall say:

May God bless you and give you grace to be faithful to your promises.

Then, addressing the congregation, he shall say:

This sacrament lays special responsibilities upon you, the people of God. Will you be faithful to your calling as members of the Church of Christ, so that, by God's grace, this child may grow up in the knowledge and love of Christ?

If you accept this responsibility, please say: I will.

The minister asks the father/mother to present the child, and baptises him:

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

The minister may say:

May the blessing of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be on you and in your heart forever. Amen.

Taking the child in his arms the minister stands before the Congregation and proclaims:

By his Baptism N..... is now received into the membership of the visible Church, and commended to the love and care of all believers, for Jesus said:

Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me.
(Luke 9:48)

The congregation sings the Aaronic Blessing (Rejoice! 352)

Returning the child to its mother the minister says:

May God bless you in the great and wonderful privilege He has given you.

The minister then calls all to prayer with words such as:

Let us pray:

O God, as you led your people Israel through the wilderness to the Promised Land by the pillar of cloud and fire, so lead N..... safely to your heavenly kingdom.

Give *him* a tender conscience that is sensitive to evil's slightest touch, and help *him* to mourn for *his* sin. Show *him* that you are a God who is rich in mercy, and that the blood of your Son can cleanse *him* from every sin. Lead *him* by your Spirit to subdue all sinful desires, and may *he* live in fellowship with you through faith in your great and precious promises.

As *he* journeys on, may *he* never rest content with *his* spiritual progress, but add to *his* faith goodness, knowledge, perseverance and love. Help *him* to possess these qualities in increasing measure so that *he* will be fruitful in *his* knowledge of our Lord Jesus.

Lord, we also pray that you would protect *him* from the powers of the Devil who will wage war against *his* soul.

Guard *him* with the armour of truth, righteousness and the spirit of prayer, so that, when the day of evil comes, *he* will stand.

And help *his* parents so to direct and pray for *him* that *he* will be a witness to Christ throughout *his* life on earth, and arrive safely in the world to come. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Baptism of the Children of Believers - Second Order

The minister, or elder shall present the Baptismal Certificate to the parents, and the minister may say:

Your child's Baptismal Certificate is not only the evidence of that which we have shared today, but will be the reminder to you of the promises made today - by you.

We pray that the day will come when *he* will embrace this faith for *himself*, and it will be your joy to present *him* with this, *his* own Baptismal Certificate. May God bless you and your child. Amen.

A hymn or psalm may be sung.

BAPTISM AND ADMISSION TO COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP FOR ADULTS - FIRST ORDER

(to take place as part of a regular Sunday service.)

The minister shall say:

Our help is in the name of the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth. (Psalm 124:8)

Friends in Christ, the Lord Jesus, before his ascension into heaven, instituted the sacrament of baptism when he said:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising 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)

This sacrament is a sign and seal of God's promise of salvation. As you confess your faith and are baptised into Christ's name, you are assured that you are united to Christ, the true vine, that your sins are forgiven, that you are adopted into God's family, and that you will be raised to eternal life on the last day.

Since you wish to be baptised, it is necessary that you answer sincerely before God the following questions:

Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

Response: I do.

Do you repent of your sin, and with a humble and grateful heart put your trust in the mercy and grace of God and in Jesus Christ whose sacrifice on the cross takes away your sin?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to share regularly with your fellow Christians in worship on the Lord's Day?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to be faithful in reading the Bible, and in prayer?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to love God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength and to give a God-honouring proportion of your time, talents and money for the Church's work in the world?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to confess Christ before others, to serve him in your daily work, and to walk in his ways all the days of your life?

Response: I do.

Do you acknowledge your dependence upon the Holy Spirit to equip you and to enable you to be faithful to this your confession?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to submit to the authority of the Session as they exercise pastoral oversight of the congregation?

Response: I do.

At this point the candidate for baptism may be invited to give a brief testimony to the grace of God in his life and his faith in Christ.

Then the minister shall say:

O God our Father, we thank you for your promise to wash away the sins of all who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray that from the fullness of his grace N..... may receive every spiritual blessing in union with him. Amen.

Then all the Congregation standing, the person or persons to be baptised shall kneel at the font and the minister, saying his Christian names, shall pour or sprinkle water on his head, saying:

N..... I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The minister shall add:

He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful. Amen. (1 Corinthians 1:8,9)

The congregation may say or sing:

The Lord bless you and keep you.... (*Rejoice!* 352)

The minister, addressing the congregation, shall say:

We now admit N..... into the membership and privileges of God's church and commit ourselves to love, exhort and encourage *him* in the Christian life.

N..... now joins us in confessing the faith of Christ crucified, and is committed with us to serve Christ faithfully to *his* life's end.

The minister and elders welcome the new member.

Let us pray:

O God our Father, as this baptism with water signifies the baptism of your Spirit, increase in N..... the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

Empower *him* by your Spirit to proclaim the gospel clearly and to attract others to Christ by *his* godly life.

Since you have begun a good work in *him*, we pray that you will bring it to completion on the day of Christ Jesus. Strengthen *him* to fight the good fight, to finish the race and to keep the faith to *his* life's end. Amen.

A hymn or psalm may be sung.

BAPTISM AND ADMISSION TO COMMUNICANT MEMBERSHIP FOR ADULTS - SECOND ORDER

At an appropriate place in the service following the preaching of the Word, the minister shall stand with the candidates at the font.

Our Lord Jesus Christ after his resurrection and before his ascension to the right hand of God, gave the following commission,

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising 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)

On the day of Pentecost, Peter proclaimed,

Repent and be baptised every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off - for all whom the Lord our God will call. (Acts 2:38-39)

Baptism is the sacrament of admission into Christ's church, in which the washing with water in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, represents and seals the washing away of sin, our being united to Christ, and having a share in the benefit of the covenant of grace and our commitment to be the Lord's.

To the candidates:

You have heard the gospel call to repentance and faith, will you now profess your faith by answering these questions?

Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

Response: I do.

Do you repent of your sin, and with a humble and grateful heart put your trust in the mercy and grace of God and in Jesus Christ whose sacrifice on the cross takes away your sin?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to share regularly with your fellow Christians in worship on the Lord's Day?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to be faithful in reading the Bible, and in prayer?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to love God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength and to give a God-honouring proportion of your time, talents and money for the Church's work in the world?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to confess Christ before others, to serve him in your daily work, and to walk in his ways all the days of your life?

Response: I do.

Do you acknowledge your dependence upon the Holy Spirit to equip you and to enable you to be faithful to this your confession?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to submit to the authority of the Session as they exercise pastoral oversight of the congregation?

Response: I do.

Let us pray:

Almighty God we thank you for your love in giving Jesus to die on the cross to save sinners. We acknowledge that you have called N..... to receive the blessing of your covenant of grace. Grant that your servant will have streams of living water flowing from within producing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. May *he* truly serve you in newness of life in Christ. Amen.

The candidate shall kneel (or stand with head bowed) at the font and the minister shall call each by his Christian name and pour or sprinkle water on his head, saying:

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

The minister may lay his hand on the head of each candidate, and pronounce this blessing.

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

The Aaronic blessing (Rejoice! 352) may be sung, during which time the minister and the elders give the right hand of fellowship.

Addressing each baptised person by name the minister shall say:

According to Christ's commandment, you are now received into the membership of the one, holy, universal and apostolic church, and to the fellowship of the Lord's Table, and are required to confess the faith of Christ crucified and risen, and to be his faithful witness to your life's end.

Let us pray:

Loving God, in whose church there is but one Lord, one faith and one baptism, give us all the grace to dwell in love and unity with all who have been baptised within the fellowship of the church, and to serve you in every part of our daily life.

Within this congregation we rejoice that your church will be enriched by the spiritual gifts this new member will bring. May we mutually encourage one another for the advancement of your kingdom and for the glory of your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ADMISSION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER OF BAPTISED PERSONS, UPON THE PUBLIC PROFESSION OF THEIR FAITH - FIRST ORDER

Addressing the congregation, the minister shall say:

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and in accordance with the decision of the Session of this congregation, we are about to admit to communicant membership of the Church and participation in the Lord's Supper N.....
They have already been under special instruction in the essentials of the Christian faith and *they are* ready to profess publicly *their* faith in Jesus Christ.

Addressing those to be admitted, the minister says:

N....., in your baptism you received the sign and seal of the new covenant. Your parents then took vows that they would teach you the truths and duties of the Christian faith, and bring you up in the fellowship of the church. God in his mercy has brought you to years of responsibility, and you have now come that you may profess your faith in the Lord Jesus. You have come to consecrate yourselves to him, and thereby bind *yourselves* to his service.

In the New Testament we read:

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. (Ephesians 4:30)

Jesus said:

Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven. (Matthew 10:32)

I ask you therefore, to make confession of your faith, and to answer with all sincerity and in the presence of God, the following questions:

Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

Response: I do.

Do you repent of your sin, and with a humble and grateful heart put your

trust in the mercy and grace of God and in Jesus Christ whose sacrifice on the cross takes away your sin?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to share regularly with your fellow Christians in worship on the Lord's Day?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to be faithful in reading the Bible, and in prayer?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to love God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength and to give a God-honouring proportion of your time, talents and money for the Church's work in the world?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to confess Christ before others, to serve him in your daily work, and to walk in his ways all the days of your life?

Response: I do.

Do you acknowledge your dependence upon the Holy Spirit to equip you and to enable you to be faithful to this your confession?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to submit to the authority of the Session as they exercise pastoral oversight of the congregation?

Response: I do.

The minister then says:

Let us pray:

Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have promised to be with your church always. We pray that you will help us to realise your

presence. We ask your blessing on these, your children, who have publicly professed their faith in you. Grant them assurance of forgiveness. Grant them the fullness of your grace. Increase in them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord. And keep them in your mercy to life eternal. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The minister calls upon the congregation to stand, then, laying his hand on the head of each as they kneel before him, says:

The God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory, bless, preserve and keep you, and grant to you his life-giving Spirit, to enable you to keep faithfully the covenant vows which you have made.

Addressing the candidates, the minister says:

Since God has given you grace to profess your faith, I now, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, and by authority of the Session, admit you to communicant membership of the church and to the fellowship of the Lord's Table. We now extend to you the right hand of fellowship.

The Aaronic blessing is sung (Rejoice! 352).

After which the minister says:

Let us pray:

We thank you, O God, for your mercy to these your servants, and to your church which has had the joy of receiving them into full communion. We thank you for their Christian training, for every good influence in their lives, and for the assurance you have given them of your love and your grace.

As they now dedicate themselves to you, we pray that you will accept and bless them. When they approach your Table to receive the symbols of the body and blood of Christ, grant that they may know his love more clearly and receive his grace more fully. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Addressing the new communicants, the minister says:

Brothers and sisters in Christ, you are now communicant members of the church. This is a great privilege. No privilege comes without corresponding responsibility. I urge you N..... to accept that responsibility. You have been called by God. Walk worthily of that calling. In the Bible, the apostle Paul uses a metaphor when speaking of the Church. Calling it the Body of Christ, he says that we are members of that Body. Be a good member of that Body, strengthening your brothers and sisters in whose ranks you take your place.

James in his letter tells us that faith without works is dead, and that we should be doers of the Word, and not merely hearers. N..... let the life of Christ be seen in your lives, that others may know whose you are and whom you serve.

Jesus himself said that if we would follow him, then we must be prepared to deny ourselves, take up our cross and follow him, and that no one, putting a hand to the plough and turning back, is fit for the kingdom of God. I charge you N..... live *lives* of self-sacrifice, *lives* of service to your Master and to others. Never deny him, for he will never deny you.

May God richly bless you and give you joy in your service and that peace which passes all understanding.

Addressing the congregation, the minister says:

And you, the members of the congregation, receive *these brothers/sisters* into your midst. Love them; surround them with your concern; uphold and support *them* in your prayers. Remember that our Lord said:

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another. (John 13:34,35)

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
(1 Corinthians 16:23)

**ADMISSION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER OF
BAPTISED PERSONS, UPON THE PUBLIC
PROFESSION OF THEIR FAITH - SECOND ORDER**

The minister shall say:

Brothers and sisters in Christ, these people are about to confirm their baptismal vows and join us in the Lord's Supper.

Then their names shall be read out and they shall stand before the communion table. The minister shall address them:

In the sacrament of baptism you received the sign and seal of ingrafting into Christ, the true vine; you were adopted into God's family and you were admitted as members of his church and committed to be his.

You now come, before God and his church to profess your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and to consecrate yourselves anew to his service. I ask you therefore to make confession of your faith and to answer in all sincerity the questions I put to you.

Then, the congregation standing, the minister shall say:

Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

Response: I do.

Do you repent of your sin, and with a humble and grateful heart put your trust in the mercy and grace of God and in Jesus Christ whose sacrifice on the cross takes away your sin?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to share regularly with your fellow Christians in worship on the Lord's Day?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to be faithful in reading the Bible, and in prayer?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to love God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind and all your strength and to give a God-honouring proportion of your time, talents and money for the Church's work in the world?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to confess Christ before others, to serve him in your daily work, and to walk in his ways all the days of your life?

Response: I do.

Do you acknowledge your dependence upon the Holy Spirit to equip you and to enable you to be faithful to this your confession?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to submit to the authority of the Session as they exercise pastoral oversight of the congregation?

Response: I do.

Let us pray:

Almighty and ever living God, who has sealed these your servants with your Holy Spirit, daily increase in them your gracious gifts and keep them in your mercy forever; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The minister, the session gathered about him, shall say:

The God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory, confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then he shall say:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, we admit you to the fellowship of the Lord's Table and to all the privileges of membership in the church. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit bless, preserve and keep you now and for evermore. Amen.

Then may be sung the Aaronic Blessing (Rejoice! 352).

Then he shall say:

Now that you have been received into the fellowship of the Lord's Table we give you the right hand of fellowship.

In this action the minister shall be joined by the session.

The minister shall then say:

Let us pray:

Almighty God you founded your church on earth and promised to preserve her to the end; we thank you for your great mercy to these your servants, and to your church, to which you have given the joy of receiving them into full communion.

We thank you for their Christian training and for every good influence in their lives, and that you have granted them the assurance of your blessing and favour; through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose words we pray:

The Lord's Prayer:

An exhortation may be given.

Then the minister shall say:

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

(2 Corinthians 13:14)

RECEPTION OF COMMUNICANTS FROM OTHER CHURCHES

The minister shall say:

The following persons have been received by the Session into the membership of this congregation by transfer and commendation from other churches.

These persons named will now present themselves for public reception into the fellowship of the congregation.

The names of those to be received are read out.

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

Response: I do.

Do you promise to submit to the authority of the local elders as they exercise pastoral oversight in this congregation?

Response: I do.

Do you promise to persevere in the diligent use of the means of grace, to seek the peace and welfare of the church, and faithfully to support its work and worship?

Response: I do.

Beloved in the Lord, as you transfer your membership in His church to this congregation, we hereby admit and welcome you to our fellowship.

Then the members of the congregation shall rise, and the minister shall say:

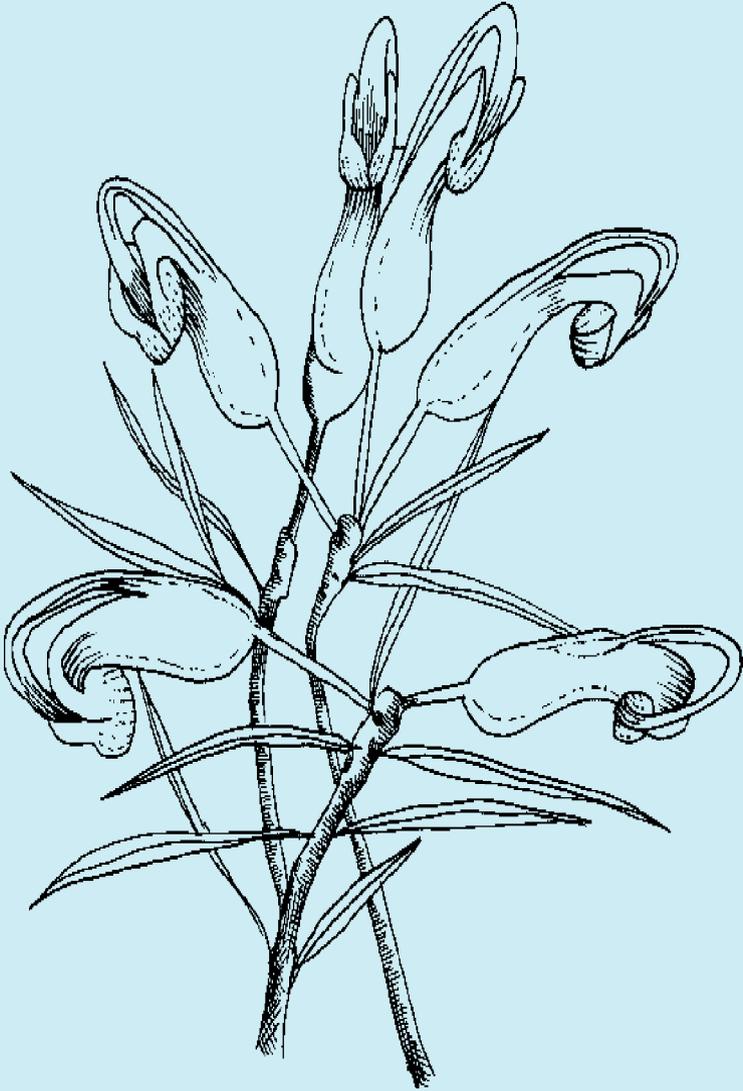
In the name of the Lord Jesus the only King and Head of the Church and by authority of the Session we welcome you to the work and worship of this congregation and pledge to you our Christian fellowship. Thus united, we pray that all of us may grow into the likeness of Christ, being faithful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reception of Communicants from Other Churches

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. (*Rejoice!* 352)
(Numbers 6:24-27)

Then the minister and elders shall give the right hand of fellowship.

Lord's Supper



Pink Spider Flower (Grevillea sericea)

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ORDERS OF SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Order of Service for the Lord's Supper, sometimes called Holy Communion, has three main divisions:

The Preparation or Approach to God;

The Word of God read and proclaimed; and

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

In the first part, God is approached in prayer and praise, with an acknowledgment of sin, and the assurance of his pardon. In the second part, the Word of God is read and proclaimed, and finds response in redirected lives, praise, the confession of faith, prayers of intercession and generous giving. In the celebration of the sacrament, what is said and done is based on our Lord's actions at the Last Supper as these are recorded in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26. The Lord Jesus took bread and wine; gave thanks to God; broke the bread; and gave the bread and the cup to his disciples, saying: **This is my body given for you...This cup is the new covenant in my blood...Do this in remembrance of me.** The service at the Lord's Table corresponds to these actions of our Lord himself.

It is not intended that the services that follow, or the prayers, are to be regarded as set forms. They do however indicate the order and the mood of prayer appropriate to the various parts of the service, and are consistent with the Word of God and the practice of the Reformed Churches since the Reformation.

Ministers, elders and people share the bread and wine; and it does not matter in what order this is done. The minister may receive first, then the elders and then the people, so that the communion spreads from the Table; or the bread and wine may be taken to the people, so that they are served first, and then the elders, and the minister last. All may eat the bread and drink the wine as they are served; or all may eat, or drink, at the same time.

While the Session ordains elders and admits Communicants and appoints the time and place for worship, the Lord's Supper is not specifically an act of the Session, which need not be constituted before the service. However, it is customary for the elders to meet with the minister for prayer, and for the allocation of duties with regard to the service.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

SIMPLE FORMAT

The Approach

The Hearing of the Word

The Preaching of the Word

The Response to the Word of God

The Lord's Supper -

- * The Invitation - (Matthew 11:28, John 6:35-37)
- * The Warrant - (1 Corinthians 11:23-29)
- * Taking of the elements (setting apart of the elements)
- * Thanksgiving and Lord's prayer
- * Breaking
- * The Sharing
- * Thanksgiving

Hymn

The Close - dismissal and benediction

THE SERVICE IN OUTLINE

THE PREPARATION OR APPROACH TO GOD

Call to Worship or Scripture Sentences

Psalm or Hymn of Praise

Prayers of Adoration and Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Psalm or Hymn

THE WORD OF GOD

Old Testament Reading

Psalm or Hymn

New Testament Reading

Prayer for understanding of the preached Word.

The proclamation of the Word of God

Confession of Faith (Apostles' or Nicene Creed)

Announcements

Prayers of Intercession

Offering/Collection

Prayer of Dedication

The Service in Outline

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Invitation to the Lord's Table

Communion Psalm or Hymn

Prayer

The Grace

The words of institution

Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord's Supper

The sharing of the bread and wine

The Peace

Prayers of Thanksgiving

Psalm or Hymn

The Blessing

THE LORD'S SUPPER - FIRST ORDER

The congregation being assembled, the minister shall say:

Let us worship God *or Scripture sentences such as:*

How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me? I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.
(Psalm 116:12-13)

I will fulfil my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people. (Psalm 116:14)

For Christ, our Passover Lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us keep the Festival. (1 Corinthians 5:7-8)

Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in him. (Psalm 34:8)

A Psalm or Hymn.

The minister shall say:

Let us pray:

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

If we claim to be sinless, we are self-deceived and strangers to the truth. If we confess our sins, he is just, and may be trusted to forgive our sins and cleanse us from every kind of wrong.

Then all may say together the following Confession of sins.

The minister shall say:

Let us together confess our sins:

Almighty God, our Father, we have sinned against you and one another; in thought, word and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have

The Lord's Supper - First Order

left undone. In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us to correct what we are, and direct what we shall be; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The minister may then say:

God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8)

God's mercy never ends. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.
Thanks be to God.

Grant to us your people that we may love what you command and desire what you promise, that whatever changes life may bring, our hearts may be fixed on you where true joys are to be found, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

or this Confession of sins may be used:

Eternal God, our heavenly Father, we, unworthy sinners approaching your presence and conscious of your glory, repent of our sins.

We have sinned, grievously sinned against you, in thought, word and deed. We have broken our vows and have dishonoured your holy name.

Yet now, most merciful Father, have mercy upon us; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord, forgive all our sins; deliver us by your Holy Spirit from all uncleanness in spirit and in body and help us sincerely to forgive others as we ask you to forgive us and strengthen us to serve you in newness of life, to the glory of your holy name.

Then may be said a short prayer of supplication or a prayer appropriate to the season;

Then may be said or sung Glory be to God in Heaven (Rejoice! 89), or another suitable Psalm or Hymn.

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, Heavenly King,
Almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
In the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

A reading from the Old Testament shall be read, after which a Psalm or Hymn shall be sung:

Then a reading from the New Testament shall be read.

Each reading may be introduced with the words:

Hear the Word of God, as it is written in..... the..... chapter, at the.....
verse.

At the end of each reading may be said:

This is the Word of the Lord.

At the conclusion of all the readings, there may be said:

Blessed are those who hear the Word of God, who keep it in their hearts
and do it.

Before the Sermon this or another Prayer for Understanding shall be offered:

The Lord's Supper - First Order

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be pleasing in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

The Proclamation of the Word of God.

Thereafter a Creed, either the Apostles' Creed or the Nicene Creed, may be said.

The Creed shall be introduced with the words:

Let us confess our faith in the words of the..... Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.**

OR

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,**

**God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten not made,
of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, and giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Announcements concerning the life of the Church may be made, after which Prayers of Intercession shall be offered, and may be said by the minister, or by a member, or members of the congregation. The Prayers of Intercession should include prayers for the Church, the Nation, the local community, for home and family life, the sick, the bereaved, and any particular need appropriate to the time.

Let us pray:

(A suitable prayer of intercession may follow.)

The Lord's Supper - First Order

... through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Offering/Collection.

Anthem or Hymn.

Then, as the offering/collection is brought forward, the minister shall go to the Communion Table.

Prayer of Thanksgiving for the offering/collection.

Then the Minister may say:

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Communion Table is the table of our Lord Jesus.

On behalf of the Session of this congregation, I therefore invite those who love the Lord Jesus Christ and are members in good standing of this or another congregation to join in this celebration of the Lord's Supper.

Then the Minister may give an Invitation in words of Holy Scripture;

Friends in Christ, hear the gracious words of the Lord Jesus:

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11:28,29)

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. (Matthew 5:6)

Then shall be sung a Communion Psalm or Hymn.

During the singing, the minister and elders shall gather in their places at the Lord's Table, and the elements shall be uncovered.

Then the Minister shall say:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

The Lord's Supper - First Order

Beloved in the Lord, listen to the words of the institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, as they are recorded by the Apostle Paul.

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

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognising the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgement on himself. (1 Corinthians 11: 23-29)

Then minister and people may join together in saying:

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

People: We lift them to the Lord.

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

People: It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Alternatively the minister may say:

Let us lift up our hearts and give thanks to the Lord our God for it is right to give him thanks and praise.

Then the minister prays a prayer of Thanksgiving:

Almighty and everlasting God, it is indeed our duty and delight always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise.

In the beginning you created the heavens and the earth and everything in

The Lord's Supper - First Order

them: you made mankind in your own image and your tender mercies are over all your works.

Mighty God, heavenly King, we magnify and praise you. With all the company of heaven we worship and adore you, evermore praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Glory to you, O Lord most high.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Almighty and merciful God, you loved the world so much that you gave your only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. We bless you for his holy incarnation, for his perfect life on earth, for his precious sufferings and death upon the cross, for his glorious resurrection from the dead, for his ascension to your right hand where he ever lives to plead our cause, for the promise of this coming again, and for his gift of the Holy Spirit. Remembering, therefore, the life and work of our Saviour Christ, and pleading his perfect sacrifice offered once and for all on the cross, we do this in obedience to his command. Amen.

And now as our Saviour Christ has taught us, we humbly pray:

Our Father...

Then the minister shall say:

On the night Jesus was betrayed, he took bread (*here the minister takes the bread into his hands*), and when he had given thanks, he broke it (*here the minister breaks the bread*) and said:

THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH IS FOR YOU; DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying:

THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT IN MY BLOOD; DO THIS WHENEVER YOU DRINK IT, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

The Lord's Supper - First Order

In giving the bread the minister shall say:

Jesus said: Take and eat: this is my body. Do this in remembrance of me.”

And in giving the cup, he shall say:

Jesus said: This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

When all have received, the vessels are returned to the Communion Table, and the minister shall say:

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

Then he shall call the people to thanksgiving, saying:

Christ has died;

Christ has risen;

Christ will come again.

Let us pray

O God our Father, you have greatly loved us and mercifully redeemed us, and now you have fed us and strengthened us at your table: give us grace that in everything we may give ourselves, our wills and our works, as a continual thank offering to you. May we live in peace and fellowship with our brothers and sisters in Christ and rejoice together in your eternal kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then a Psalm or Hymn is sung.

Thereafter the minister shall say:

Go in peace; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

THE LORD'S SUPPER - SECOND ORDER

Let us worship God:

A Psalm or Hymn shall be sung:

Come, let us praise the Lord!

Let us sing for joy to God who protects us!

Let us bow down and worship him.

Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

Lord God our Father, we come into your presence with praise and thanksgiving. We come before you with joy and gladness. You are our God. You are the source of all that we know of truth and beauty, of justice and mercy, of wisdom and righteousness and goodness and love. We come into your presence with awe and reverence, because you are holy. You have made us, that we might know you and love you. We rejoice to proclaim your greatness to all of mankind, because you and you alone are God, and you have made us your people. Father, as we behold your majesty, we bow before you, in adoration and worship.

Lord Jesus Christ, we praise you that you were willing to take the nature of a servant and become like us, that you might give your life to set us free from the bondage of sin which held us under sentence of death. We rejoice that you walked the path of obedience all the way to the cross, for us. You were wounded because of our sins, beaten because of our evil deeds. We are healed by the punishment you suffered, made whole by the blows you received. Again, we rejoice that it was not possible that death should hold you prisoner, that on the third day, the tomb was empty, and we praise you that you are the risen, victorious Lord of life and death, of time and of eternity. Lord Jesus, as we gather this day to remember your sacrificial death for us, we bow before you in adoration and worship.

Lord God, you have loved us, and in grace, you have made us your people, but we confess before you now, that we have sinned. We confess our secret sins that remain hidden from those about us, and our open sins that are known to many. We confess the sins which lie heavy on our hearts, and the sins which no longer trouble us, because our hearts have become hardened. We confess that we have not loved one another, as Christ has loved us, nor have we forgiven one another as he has forgiven us. Through the death of Christ our Saviour, forgive us and cleanse us, we pray. Your word assures us that if we confess our sins to you, you will keep your

The Lord's Supper - Second Order

promise and do what is right. You will forgive us our sins, and purify us from all our wrongdoing. Confirm to us again this pardon, we pray.

Spirit of the Living God, you are to us the guarantee that we shall receive all that has been promised to us. Your presence with us is indeed the stamp of ownership upon us, assuring us that we are God's people, and that we shall come eventually into that perfect freedom he has promised us in Christ. Fill our hearts and lives with your presence. Make us wise. Open our minds that we might know the nature of the hope to which we have been called, and the riches of the wonderful blessings promised to us. Work in us with that same mighty strength with which Christ was raised from death to life, that in that strength, we might overcome the temptations we shall meet this day, and so live to his glory. In his name, we ask it. Amen.

Hear the Word of God as it is written in the Old Testament.

A Psalm or Hymn shall be sung.

Hear again the Word of God from the New Testament.

Let us respond to the reading of God's Word by affirming together the faith we share. We shall join in saying together the Apostles' Creed:

The Apostles' Creed.

The SERMON shall then be preached.

A Offering/Collection may be taken up.

Then a Psalm or a Hymn may be sung.

Friends, hear the gracious words of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your soul. (Matthew 11:28)

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. (Matthew 5:6)

The Lord's Supper - Second Order

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Communion Table is the table of our Lord Jesus. On behalf of the Session of this congregation, I therefore invite those who love the Lord Jesus Christ and are members in good standing of this or another congregation to join in this celebration of the Lord's Supper.

A Psalm or Hymn may be sung:

Let us pray:

Eternal God our Father, by the blood of his sacrifice on the cross, Jesus Christ your Son our Lord has opened for us a new and living way into the Most Holy Place, into your very presence. Through his death, we have been put right with you. Grant us now the assurance of your mercy, that we, your forgiven people, may gather at this table and share in this celebration, to the praise of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Lord Jesus, this is your table, prepared in obedience to your command. We have come in response to your gracious invitation. Come now to us, Lord, each one. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Friends, hear the words of institution of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as they are recorded by the apostle Paul. He wrote to the Christians in Corinth, saying:

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

Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine

himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognising the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. (1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

Today, we follow Jesus' example in word and deed, and in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we fulfil his institution.

As he, the night of his betrayal, took bread, I take these elements of bread and wine and set them apart from common use to this special purpose; and as he gave thanks, let us present to God our prayers of thanksgiving.

The Lord be with you!
And with you!

Lift up your hearts!
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks!
It is right and fitting to do so.

Lord God, it is indeed right and fitting that at all times, and in all places, we your people should delight to give thanks to you. You are the eternal God, the creator of the heavens and the earth, and of all that is in them. You have made us in your own image, and in love and mercy, you support and sustain us, holding us in the hollow of your hand.

We join with the seraphim and with the whole company of the heavenly host who surround your throne, bowing before you in worship, ever praising you and saying: "Holy, Holy, Holy! The Lord Almighty is holy! His glory fills the world!" Lord God our Father, you loved the world so much that you gave your only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not die but have eternal life.

Father, weak and sinful though we are, we praise you for the gift of your Son, for his birth into an ordinary home and family, and for his perfect life among us as a man. We thank you for his death for us on the cross, and we rejoice in his resurrection from the dead. We remember with thanks his ascension to your right hand and his continued intercession for us. With joy, we proclaim to the world that he is king, that he rules at your right

The Lord's Supper - Second Order

hand, and will return to judge all of mankind. For his gift of the Holy Spirit who has sealed us to be your people, we give you endless thanks and praise.

Remembering his sacrificial death for us, we have prepared this memorial to him in obedience to his command. We ask that your Spirit might so work in us, that as we break this bread and eat it, we may truly share in the body of Christ, and as we give thanks for this cup and drink from it, we may truly share in the blood of Christ. Grant that by faith, we may indeed so feed upon him, that we may live in him, and he in us, eternally, to the glory of your holy name.

As we gather at this table, we offer ourselves afresh to you, as a living sacrifice, dedicated to your service. And as we bring you our praise and our thanks, so we ask that you would fulfil in us and in all your people, the purpose of your love in redeeming us in Jesus Christ our Lord, that in him, through the power of the Holy Spirit, your name might be honoured and glorified, for ever and ever. And in the words which Christ our Lord has taught us, we further pray, saying:

The Lord's Prayer may be said.

Following the example and command of our Lord Jesus Christ, and as a memorial to him, we do this. On the night in which he was betrayed, he took a piece of bread, and when he had given thanks to God, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me." In the same way, after the supper, he took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

At the distribution of the bread, the minister says:

**TAKE THIS AND EAT IT. THIS IS THE BODY OF CHRIST,
WHICH IS FOR YOU. DO THIS IN MEMORY OF HIM.**

At the distribution of the wine, the minister says:

**THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT IN CHRIST S BLOOD.
DRINK THIS IN MEMORY OF HIM.**

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

The Lord's Supper - Second Order

Let us pray:

Almighty and Ever-living God, from the depths of our hearts, we thank you that in love, you are pleased to receive us at this table, and to feed us with this spiritual food, again assuring us of your grace and of your mercy towards us. Again you have assured us that we are part of the Body of Christ, and have confirmed and strengthened our expectation, that in company with all his faithful people everywhere, we will through grace be received with joy, into his kingdom. Father, as we go forth to serve you, we pray that you would so sustain us by your Spirit that we may continue in this holy fellowship with you and with one another, and live forever to your glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Psalm or Hymn shall be sung.

Go in peace!

**And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God our Father,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all evermore. Amen.**

THE LORD'S SUPPER - THIRD ORDER

The first part of the service shall proceed as usual. At the appropriate time the minister shall say:

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Communion Table is the table of our Lord Jesus.

On behalf of the Session of this congregation, I therefore invite those who love the Lord Jesus Christ and are members in good standing of this or another congregation to join in this celebration of the Lord's Supper.

As we draw near to the Table we gratefully remember that our Lord instituted this Sacrament for the perpetual memory of his death, and the pledge of his love, as a bond of the union with him and with each other as members of the Church which is his Body, and as the assurance of his coming again.

Let us pray:

O God who by the life and death and rising again of your dear Son has consecrated for us a new and living way into your holy presence, cleanse our minds by the working of your Spirit, that we may draw near to you with a pure heart, and worthily magnify your Name. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Psalm or Hymn shall here be sung:

The minister stands at the Table. Then shall the minister say:

Hear the gracious words of our Saviour:

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11:28)

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)

The Lord's Supper - Third Order

Let us hear the words of the institution of the Lord's Supper as they are delivered to us by the apostle Paul:

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me. For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognising the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself.
(1 Corinthians 11:23-29)

Let us pray:

All glory to you, Father, for of your great love for mankind, you gave your only Son Jesus Christ, that all who trust in him should not perish, but have eternal life. We give praise and thanks for him, our great High Priest, who by his death on the cross offered for mankind the one true sacrifice for sin and obtained an eternal deliverance for his people. So now, Father, with praise and thanksgiving we do as your Son commanded: we recall before you his suffering, his death and resurrection; we acknowledge his reign in glory; and we look for the coming of his kingdom.

We give you our thanks and praise, in the unity of the Holy Spirit through the same Lord Jesus Christ in whose words we pray:

Our Father....

Then the minister shall say:

The Lord Jesus, on the night in which he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it (*the minister breaks the bread*) and said:

THIS IS MY BODY, WHICH IS FOR YOU; DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

The minister says:

In the same way after supper he took the cup saying:

THIS CUP IS THE NEW COVENANT IN MY BLOOD; DO THIS WHENEVER YOU DRINK IT, IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME.

When all have eaten the minister may read a suitable passage of Scripture or say:

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

Let us pray:

Thank you, O Lord our God, for the privilege of joining in the Lord's Supper and for its reminder to us of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus. Renew our faith and obedience that we may serve you without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. Give to us the strength to fight the good fight of faith and to endure to the end. As we have received Christ, help us to live in Him. Make us wise so that we might live in a manner pleasing to you, enjoying life's pleasures with thankfulness, fulfilling its duties with faithfulness, and bearing its trials with patience. Instruct and guide us by your Spirit so that above all else we might obey and please you, and live with you in your holy and everlasting Kingdom. These things we pray through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be thanksgiving, honour and glory, now and forever. Amen.

Then shall a Psalm or Hymn be sung.

A blessing shall be said or sung.

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 amongst you, and remain with you always. Amen.

Marriage



Pencil Orchid (Dendrobium beckleri)

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE - FIRST ORDER

The minister shall say:

Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labour in vain.
(Psalm 127:1)

Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. (Psalm 124:8)

Let us sing His praises.

A hymn of praise is sung.

We are here in God's presence so that M..... and F..... may be united in marriage.

Marriage is a state of life which God has provided for mankind.

Jesus, our Lord, honoured it by his presence at a marriage in Cana in Galilee.

Throughout the Scriptures marriage is an honoured relationship and in the New Testament the bond of marriage is seen as a sign of the loyalty and the love that exists between Christ and his church.

Marriage is not to be entered into lightly or carelessly but with reverent and serious consideration of the purposes for which it has been given.

It was given so that husband and wife might always enjoy each other's companionship, help and support.

It was given for the proper expression of human sexuality.

It was given so that family life might continue and that children might be brought up in the love and security of a stable and happy home.

It was given so that human society might be healthy and have a firm foundation.

M..... and F..... now desire to enter this deep and life-long relationship with each other.

The Marriage Service - First Order

If anyone can show any reason why this marriage would not be lawful, now is the time to declare it.

And I require and charge you both, knowing that you are answerable to God, that if either of you know any reason why your marriage would not be lawful, you declare it now.

Let us ask God's blessing on this marriage.

Almighty God, Father of us all, we turn to you, the giver of all good gifts and humbly thank you for all the blessings of our life.

Especially at this time we thank you for love - for the love and concern of parents and of all who have taught, guided and cared for us through the years; and for the love and trust with which M..... and F..... are drawn together in marriage.

We thank you too that you have given us marriage in order to guard, to strengthen and to make perfect the same gift of love.

And since it is only with your help that we can do anything well, please strengthen M..... and F..... so that they may sincerely make and truly keep their vows to one another.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The minister says:

M..... will you take F..... to be your wife and do you commit yourself to her in love and honour, in duty and service, in faith and tenderness, to live with her and to cherish her in the exclusive bond of marriage?

Bridegroom responds: I will.

F..... will you take M..... to be your husband and do you commit yourself to him in love and honour, in duty and service, in faith and tenderness, to live with him and to cherish him in the exclusive bond of marriage?

Bride responds: I will.

The Marriage Service - First Order

The minister now addresses the father of the bride or substitute.

N..... do you give F..... to be married to M.....?

Bride's father responds: I do.

The minister says:

Please face each other and join hands.

The bridegroom says:

I, M..... take you F..... to be my wife. I promise to be a loving, faithful and dutiful husband to you so long as we both shall live.

The bride says:

I, F..... take you M..... to be my husband. I promise to be a loving, faithful and dutiful wife to you so long as we both shall live.

The ring/s is/are given to the minister, who says:

As a token of the commitment into which you have entered this ring is given and received.

The minister passes the ring/rings to M. or M. and F.

M..... and F..... say in giving the rings:

I give you this ring as a symbol of all that we have promised and all that we shall share.

The minister says:

M..... and F..... you have now taken each other to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until God separates you by death.

The Marriage Service - First Order

Now that you have made your covenant together in marriage, declaring it before God and your family and friends, I declare that you are husband and wife.

The bride and the groom may kneel.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord pour out the riches of his grace upon you that you may please him and live together in love until your life's end. Amen.

Those whom God has joined together, let no one separate.

A marriage hymn is sung.

The Scriptures are read and a Sermon may be preached.

Let us pray:

Heavenly Father, we offer our prayers to you for M..... and F..... who are now bound together in the covenant of marriage so that with your love in their hearts, your joy may be theirs and their joy complete.

May your love be the true foundation and light of their home.

May your love be their treasure and wealth in life, that their happiness may not depend upon their outward circumstances.

Make them a blessing to their neighbours, their friends, their family and the generations that follow.

When everything is going well, help them not to take their blessings for granted.

When they face the difficulties of life, guide them by your Spirit that they may know your way.

When they come to suffering and sorrow, may they be drawn closer together and nearer to you.

What we have asked for this couple Father, we ask for each family

The Marriage Service - First Order

represented here today - that those who pledged their love to each other long ago may find their love deepened; and that those who have taken marriage vows may now renew them, and strengthen their love for each other.

The Lord's Prayer may be said.

**Go in peace.
Be joyful in the love of God.
And the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be upon you all this day and always. Amen.**

The wedding party shall then proceed to sign the register.

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE - SECOND ORDER

Music
Entry of the Bridal Party
Selected verses from Psalms 145-148
Hymn of praise
Welcome
Explanation of Marriage
Prayer
Bible Readings
Genesis 2:4-7,18-24
Ecclesiastes 4:9-12
Mark 10:2-9

The Marriage:

Introduction:

As we have just heard, Christian marriage was established by God for the life long companionship, support and comfort which husband and wife ought to have of each other.

It was also established for the continuance of family life, so that children might be brought up in a loving manner and encouraged to serve God in their lives.

It was established for the welfare of human society which can be strong and happy only when the marriage bond is held in honour.

The Promises:

The Minister addresses the groom and bride in turn:

Will you have F..... to be your wife, to live together in marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and support her, in sickness and in health, as long as you both live?

Response: I will.

Will you have M..... to be your husband, to live together in marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honour and support him, in sickness and in health, as long as you both live?

Response: I will.

The Marriage Service - Second Order

The minister addresses the parents of the bride and groom:

Do you give your consent and blessing to this marriage?

Response: We do.

The Statement Of Commitment:

In the presence of God and before this congregation. I N..... take you N..... to be my husband/wife. I commit myself to love and to serve you to the utmost of my ability as God enables me.

And this commitment I will keep no matter what circumstances may arise, until we are separated by death.

The Exchange of Rings:

The ring is a sign of continuing faithfulness and unbroken love. With this ring I wed you. I give it to you as a symbol of the promises we make to each other today in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

The Declaration of Marriage:

Prayer

Now let us join together in praying for M..... and F.....

God our Father, in your great love for mankind you have given the gift of marriage. So bless M..... and F..... as they pledge their lives to each other, that their love may ever more grow to be the true reflection of your love for us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers

Hymn

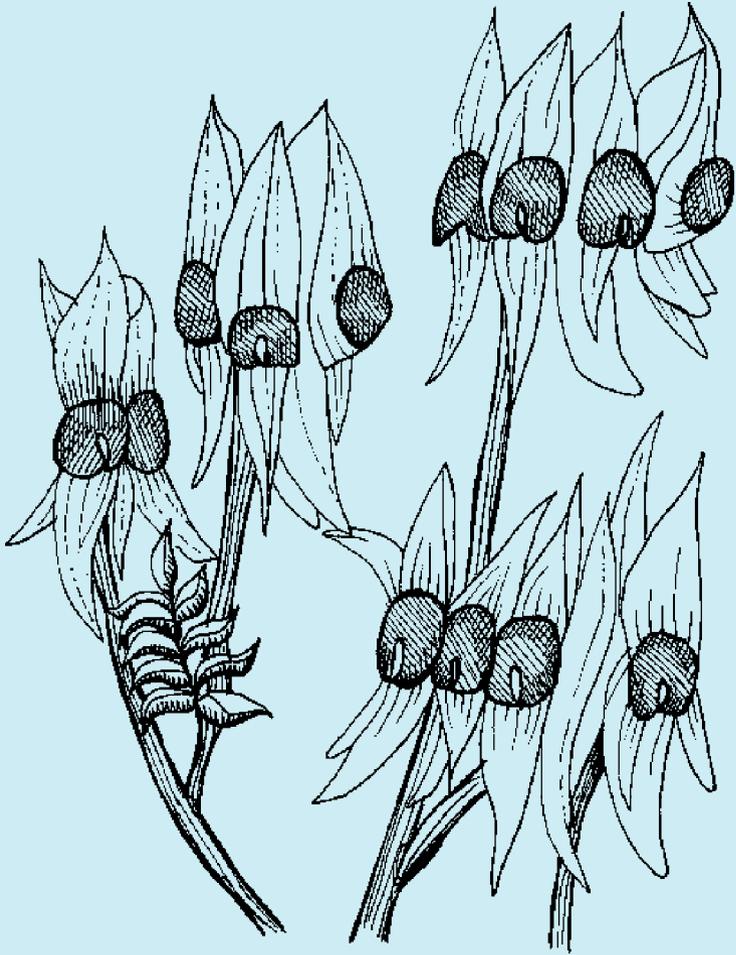
Bible Reading: Ephesians 5:21-33 - Colossians 3:12-17

Signing of the Register

The Blessing

Doxology

Funeral



Sturt's Desert Pea (Lianthus formosus)

AN ORDER FOR A FUNERAL SERVICE

WITNESS TO THE RESURRECTION

Where a different typeface is used, those leading the service may consider it appropriate to omit the section.

The minister shall say:

Friends, we have come together for the funeral of N.....

We come to mourn a relative, to honour a departed friend and to show sympathy to the bereaved.

We believe that those who die in Christ share eternal life with him. Therefore in faith and hope we come together to offer a prayer of thanksgiving and trust to God for what he has done for us in the death and resurrection of Jesus. We recall the certainty of our own coming death and judgement, and we proclaim that Christ is risen and that those who believe in him will rise with him.

A selection from the following may be used:

Jesus said:

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. (John 3:16)

and

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. (John 11:25, 26)

The Bible says:

The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. (Deuteronomy 33:27)

Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you.
(Psalm 55:22)

God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. (Psalm 46:1)

An Order for a Funeral Service

Now we see but a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. (1 Corinthians 13:12)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.
(2 Corinthians 1:3,4)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade - kept in heaven for you. (1 Peter 1:3,4)

A hymn or psalm may be sung.

The following prayer may be used:

Father, your love is stronger than death. Those who trust in your Son receive the gift of eternal life. Help us, as we hear your promises, to believe them and receive the comfort they offer. You are the giver of hope; fill us with joy and peace in believing, so that we may have abundant life through the power of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A selection from the following Scripture readings may be used:

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. (Psalm 23)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

(Psalm 23 A.V.)

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbour his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord s love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children s children - with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts. (Psalm 103:8-18)

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved: He that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: He shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore. (Psalm 121 A.V.)

Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God. You turn men back to dust, saying, Return to dust. O sons of men. For a thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night. You sweep men away in the sleep of death; they are like the new grass of the morning - though in the morning it springs up new, by evening it is dry and withered. We are consumed by your anger and terrified by your indignation. You have set our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence. All our days pass away under your wrath; we finish our years with a moan. The length of our days is seventy years - or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away. Who knows the power of your anger? For your wrath is as great as the fear that is due you. Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom. Relent, O Lord! How long will it be? Have compassion on your servants. Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

Make us glad for as many days as you have afflicted us, for as many years as we have seen trouble. May your deeds be shown to your servants, your splendour to their children. May the favour of the Lord our God rest upon us; establish the work of our hands for us - yes, establish the work of our hands.

(Psalm 90)

The following psalms or psalm portions are also suitable:

Psalm 39:4-8,12; Psalm 42; Psalm 130

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs - heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. What, then, shall

we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all - how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died - more than that, who was raised to life - is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:16-18,28,31-35,37-39)

If only for this life we have hope in Christ, we are to be pitied more than all men. But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the first fruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

But someone may ask, How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come? How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of corn or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body.

So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.

For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labour in the Lord is not in vain.

(1 Corinthians 15:19-26; 35-38; 42-44; 50; 53-58)

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. He who was seated on the throne said, I am making everything new! Then he said, Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true. He said to me: It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To him who is thirsty I will give to drink without cost from the spring of the water of life. He who overcomes will inherit all this, and I will be his God and he will be my son. (Revelation 21:1-7)

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no-one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.' All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying:

'Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!'

Then one of the elders asked me: 'There in white robes - who are they, and where did they come from?'

I answered: 'Sir, you know.'

And he said: These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them nor any scorching heat.

For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. (Revelation 7:9-17)

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.'

Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?'

Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.'

Jesus replied, 'If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me. All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.' (John 14:1-6; 23-27)

It is written: 'I believed; therefore I have spoken.'

With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak, because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and will bring us with you in his presence. All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. (2 Corinthians 4:13-18; 5:9)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade - kept in heaven for you, who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith - of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire - may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honour when Jesus Christ is revealed. Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him

now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls. (1 Peter 1:3-9)

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom the whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:14-21)

An Address / Sermon may be delivered.

Let us pray:

God of all grace, who in Jesus Christ our Saviour brought eternal life: we give you thanks that by his death he has destroyed the power of death and sin, and by his resurrection opened the kingdom of heaven to all believers. Grant us to know and believe that because he lives, those who trust in him will live also, and that neither death nor life, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate your adopted children from your love, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

O Heavenly Father, who in your Son Jesus Christ has given us a true faith and a sure hope: help us, we pray, to live as those who believe and trust in the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection to life everlasting; and strengthen this faith and hope in us all the days of our life; through the love of your Son Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

O Lord our Father, we thank you for the life of N....., for all your goodness to *him*, for all that *he* was to those who loved *him* and for everything in *his* life that reflected your goodness and love.

An Order for a Funeral Service

We thank you that in Jesus Christ for *him* death is past and pain is ended and that *he* has entered the joy which you have prepared; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Almighty God, strengthen those who sorrow; enable them to look to Jesus Christ for encouragement and hope, that through the Scriptures they may place their trust in the God who raised him from the dead.

The Lord's Prayer may be said.

Here may be sung a hymn of praise, after which the minister says:

Hear the words of our Lord Jesus Christ:

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 be afraid. (John 14:27)

Or

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

Or

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 Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and for evermore! Amen. (Jude 24, 25)

The Committal

Introductory sentences as required

I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. (John 11:25, 26)

He will swallow up death forever. The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from all faces. (Isaiah 25:8)

The Lord says:

Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! (Revelation 1:17b, 18)

Other scripture sentences such as Revelation 14:13; Romans 14:7; Psalm 90:1-4; Psalm 136:1-3; Psalm 130:1-6; Psalm 139:1-5 can be used.

Words of Committal

The minister may choose one of the following:

Having given thanks for the life of our *brother* N....., we now commit *his* mortal body to the ground/ to be cremated, *earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust*, [in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life] through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died, was buried, and rose again for us. To him be glory for ever.

Or

Seeing that the earthly life of *our brother* has come to an end we commit *his* body to be buried/cremated, *earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust*, [confident of the resurrection to eternal life] through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Or

Seeing that the earthly life of *our brother* has come to an end we commit *his* body to be buried/cremated, *earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to*

An Order for a Funeral Service

dust, in the knowledge that God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him has eternal life.

Or

Forasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God to take from life on earth N....., we therefore commit *his* body to the ground/to be cremated, *earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust*, trusting in the mercy of Almighty God, to whom we shall all give an account.

Or

Almighty God, we commit N..... to the grave/to be cremated, *earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust*, trusting and believing your promise of the resurrection to eternal life, through faith in Jesus Christ our Lord who died that we might live, and who lives that we might believe.

O Heavenly Father, in your Son Jesus Christ you have given us a true faith and a sure hope: help us to live as those who believe and trust in the forgiveness of sins and the resurrection to eternal life, and strengthen this faith and hope in us all the days of our life, through the love of your son Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

Almighty God, Father of all mercies and God of all comfort, deal graciously, we pray, with all who mourn, that casting all their care on you, they may know the consolation of your love: through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Blessing:

Go in peace: the blessing of God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be amongst you and remain with you always. Amen.

AN ORDER FOR A FUNERAL SERVICE FOR A CHILD

Scripture sentences:

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him. (Psalm 103:13)

As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem. (Isaiah 66:13)

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

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no-one can snatch them out of my hand.

My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no-one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.
(John 10:11,27-29)

Alternatively, the minister may use this preface, or one of his own devising:

We have come together to worship God; to thank him for his love, and to remember the life of N....., to share our grief over the loss of this child and entrust *him* into the eternal care of God.

We meet in the knowledge that in Jesus Christ death is not the end and that we can be enabled with his help to face it without fear, or desperation, or guilt.

Psalm 23 is said or sung.

Prayer of Approach:

Eternal God our Father, whose love knows no end; please help us, through this service, to know that you are close to us.

Funeral Service for a Child

As we hear your promises help us to believe them and accept the comfort they offer.

Let our faith be deepened even through our loss so that we may be spared bitterness, doubt or unending sorrow and find your lasting peace. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Promises of God:

The following Psalms or Psalm portions are suitable: Psalm 121; Psalm 39:4-8, 12; Psalm 42; Psalm 90:1-6, 10, 12; Psalm 130.

One or more of the following passages is read:

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. (Mark 10:13-16)

'Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.' Thomas said to him, Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?"

Jesus answered,

'I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.'

'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to

you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.' (John 14:1-6, 27)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows.

(2 Corinthians 1:3-5)

He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: 'I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.'

'See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.' (Matthew 18:2-5, 10-14)

An Address may be given.

Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Gracious God, we thank you that nothing can separate us from your love, neither death nor life, nor things present, nor things to come.

We thank you for all that you have done for mankind through Jesus Christ.

By giving him to live and die for us, you have revealed yourself, you have shown the depth of your love.

Funeral Service for a Child

By raising him from the dead, you have promised that those who trust in him will share his resurrection-life.

Grant us, then, that confidence in you which, even at the time of our distress and bewilderment, clings to your guiding hand and so finds strength and comfort.

We thank you for the love and joy N..... brought with *him* and produced in us, and for the coming of your Son who brought life and hope into the world, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

Where the Committal is to be in another place, this part of the service may end with a hymn, and an ascription of glory, such as:

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 Saviour, be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and for evermore! Amen. (Jude 24-25)

The Committal:

Having expressed our trust in God's loving care, we now commit N.....'s body to the ground/to be cremated, *earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust*, [in the certain hope of eternal life, /to await the resurrection of all the dead on the Last Day,] through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:38, 39)

For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water.

**And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.
(Revelation 7:17)**

Funeral Service for a Child

Prayer of Petition:

Loving Father, whose Son is the resurrection and the life, give us comfort in this time of deep sadness. Let us rest in your peace and look for your purpose being fulfilled now and in the future. Remind us day by day that in everything, you work for good with those who love you and are called according to your purpose. Help us now to live our lives within your love and peace until at last we are united with all your children in the happiness of your eternal kingdom: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing:

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.

AN ORDER FOR A SERVICE FOR THE BURIAL OR SCATTERING OF ASHES

Scripture sentences:

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. (John 3:16)

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. (Romans 14:8)

Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. (2 Corinthians 4:16 - 5:1)

The Burial or Scattering takes place

The Burial or Scattering of Ashes

Having expressed our trust in God's loving care, we now commit *his* ashes to their resting-place; in the sure and certain hope of resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died, was buried, and rose again for us. To him be glory for ever. Amen.

Prayer of Petition:

This or another prayer may be used:

Eternal God, who destroyed death's power over us by your Son's death and resurrection, we remember N.....with love and thankfulness, and we pray that you will help us to be thankful for all that was good and praiseworthy in *his* life. Amen.

God our Father, who in your compassion sent your Son into this world to suffer and to die for our salvation, we give you thanks for his victory over sin on the cross of Calvary. We thank you for his triumph for us over death and for his resurrection which has brought life and immortality to light for all who believe in his Gospel. Grant to us the assurance that, as Christ rose from the dead and became the first fruits of those who died, so those who die in Christ will rise with him.

The Lord's Prayer:

The Blessing:

**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.**

Ministry



Flannel Flower (Actinotus helianthi)

AN ORDER FOR THE ORDINATION AND INDUCTION OF MINISTERS

The congregation stands while the presbytery enters the church and afterwards the Moderator shall call the people to worship with the following words:

Let us worship God:

Our help is in the name of the Lord the maker of heaven and earth. (Psalm 124:8)

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'

(Isaiah 52:7, Psalm 65:1-5) *Rejoice! 3 may be sung.*

Let us pray:

Living God, creator and sustainer of the universe we thank you for coming to us in Jesus Christ to reveal your love and to redeem mankind, for founding the church and imparting to us your Holy Spirit. Inspire and bless our worship that we may offer ourselves to you in spirit and in truth.

Holy God, we confess our sins to you. We have broken your commandments, we have forgotten your goodness, we have not been faithful to the trust committed to us.

Have mercy on us O God.

Forgive us and grant us the assurance that we are forgiven, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Heavenly Father, purify our love for you, deepen our devotion to your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, strengthen our loyalty to his church, and inspire in us a greater desire to serve your kingdom and glorify your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with you our Father, and the Holy Spirit, be honour and praise for ever. Amen.

An Old Testament reading (such as Isaiah 61:1-6).

Ordination and Induction of Ministers

Psalm 68:18-20 (Rejoice! 245) may be sung.

A New Testament reading (such as 1 Peter 5:1-4, John 21:15-17)

Sermon

The Apostles' Creed may be said by the congregation, standing:

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.**

Let us pray:

Lord our God, founder of the church on earth, in Jesus Christ you promised to abide with her for ever, cleanse and enlighten her by your Holy Spirit.

We pray for all ministers of your Word and Sacraments. Increase in them your grace so that with joy and assurance they may guard and feed your people, always looking to the Chief Shepherd of the flock.

We pray for this congregation and parish. Surround your people with the knowledge of your love and care that with one heart and with one mind they may strive together for the faith of the gospel.

Ordination and Induction of Ministers

We pray for the growth of your kingdom in all the world that many will come to know Jesus Christ as Lord.

We pray for our rulers and for all in authority among us that our nation may be built up by the love of righteousness, enriched with liberty and order and kept in unity and peace.

We pray for the lonely and the sad, for the sick and the sorrowful, for all in any need. Give strength to the weary, relief to the sufferers, comfort to the sad and peace to the dying.

We give you thanks, O God, for all your servants who once lived among us on earth and who now rejoice with you in heaven. Finally bring us to be with them in your nearer presence, through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you Father, and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever. Amen.

Announcements may be made.

The offering/collection of the congregation is received and a prayer of dedication is said.

A narrative of the steps leading to the ordination and/or induction is read by the Presbytery Clerk or the Interim Moderator.

The licentiate or minister having stood before the presbytery, the Moderator shall read the following preamble:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, who being ascended on high, has given gifts to his people for the building up of the body of Christ, we have met here as a presbytery to ordain (*and/or induct*) M..... into the pastoral charge of this congregation and parish.

In this act the Presbyterian Church of Australia, as part of the holy catholic Church, worshipping one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, affirms anew its belief in the gospel of the sovereign grace and love of God, wherein through Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, incarnate, crucified and risen, he freely offers to all men, upon repentance and faith, forgiveness of sins, renewal by the Holy Spirit, and eternal life, and calls them to labour in the fellowship of faith for the advancement of the kingdom of God throughout the world.

Ordination and Induction of Ministers

The Presbyterian Church of Australia acknowledges the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the supreme rule of faith and life.

The Presbyterian Church of Australia holds as its subordinate standard the Westminster Confession of Faith, read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on 24th day of July 1901, recognising liberty of opinion on such points of doctrine not essential to the doctrine therein taught, and claiming the right, in dependence on the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, to formulate, interpret, or modify its subordinate standard, always in agreement with the Word of God and the essential doctrines contained in the subordinate standard.

The Moderator, addressing the people, shall say:

I have to request you, the members of this congregation, to stand and signify your assent to the following questions. You will signify your assent by raising your right hand

1. Do you, the communicants and adherents of this congregation, adhere to the call which you have already subscribed in favour of M..... N..... to be your minister?
2. Do you cordially receive him as your minister, promising to provide him with suitable maintenance, and to give him all due respect, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord?

The following blessing may be said:

May Almighty God accept and bless you and give you his Spirit that those things that you have purposed in your heart you may be enabled to fulfil, to the glory of his name and the building up of his church. Amen.

The Moderator, addressing the licentiate or minister, shall say:

M....., you are now required to answer the questions appointed by the church.

Ordination and Induction of Ministers

1. Do you believe the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the only rule of faith and practice?

Response: I do.

2. Do you own and accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, as amended by the General Assembly, read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on 24th day of July, 1901, as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures, and as a confession of your faith; and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power to assert, maintain, and defend the same?

Response: I do.

3. Do you own and accept the purity of worship as practised in this Church?

Response: I do.

4. Do you own the Presbyterian form of government to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto; and do you promise that through the grace of God, you will firmly and constantly adhere to, and to the utmost of your power, in your station, assert, maintain, and defend the same?

Response: I do.

5. Are zeal for the glory of God, love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire to save souls, and not worldly interests or expectations (so far as you know your own heart), your great motives and chief inducements to the work of the Holy Ministry?

Response: They are.

6. Do you accept this Call and promise through grace to perform all the duties of a faithful minister of the Gospel among this people?

Response: I do.

7. Do you promise to give conscientious attendance upon the Courts of this Church and to direct your best attention to the business thereof, doing all in a spirit of faithfulness, brotherly kindness, and charity?

Ordination and Induction of Ministers

Response: I do.

8. Do you promise, in the strength of Divine Grace, to lead a holy and circumspect life, to rule well your own house, and faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully to perform all the parts of the ministerial work to the edifying of the body of Christ in love?

Response: I do.

9. All these things you profess and promise through grace, as you shall be answerable at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Response: I do.

The following blessing may be said:

May Almighty God accept and bless you and give you his Spirit that those things you have purposed in your heart you may be enabled to fulfil, to the glory of his name and the building up of his church. Amen.

The Moderator shall call upon the licentiate or minister to sign the formula, saying:

You are now required to sign the formula as a seal to these vows which you have made.

The Presbytery Clerk may read the formula and shall direct the licentiate or minister in signing the formula.

A hymn such as Come Holy Ghost, our hearts inspire (Rejoice! 263) may be sung.

The licentiate or minister shall take his place before the Moderator of the presbytery and kneel. The Moderator shall say:

Let us pray:

Almighty God who in your great love for all mankind gave your only Son Jesus Christ to be our Redeemer and the giver of everlasting life, and have exalted him to your right hand from where he has sent the Holy Spirit and given gifts to his people, we thank you for all your blessings to your people

Ordination and Induction of Ministers

and we humbly pray that your Holy Spirit will fill your servant M....., whom we, in your name and in obedience to your will do now, by the laying on of our hands...

The Moderator and members of Presbytery lay their hands on the head of the licentiate. (See GAA 1994 BB Min. 66)

...ordain and appoint to the office of the pastoral Ministry in your church committing to him authority to dispense your Word and Sacraments and to bear rule in your church. Give him such fullness of your grace as shall fit him more and more for the work to which he has been called.

Where an ordained minister is being inducted the following prayer shall be used in place of the above, the Moderator saying:

Almighty God, through your Son, Jesus Christ, the Chief Shepherd of the sheep, you have appointed your ordained servants to feed and guide your flock. We thank you that you have provided a pastor for your people and we humbly pray that you will send your Holy Spirit to this your servant and give him such fullness of your grace as shall fit him more and more for the work to which he has been called.

The prayers continue, the Moderator saying:

Grant that he may boldly make known your Word and Will. Make him a light to those who live in darkness, a watchful and loving guardian of your flock and a follower of the Good Shepherd who gave his life for the sheep. Give him meekness, patience and firmness to bear the trials and troubles of his ministry and strengthen him by your Spirit that he may remain steadfast to the end and be received with all your faithful servants into the joy of the Lord.

O God, whose Holy Spirit has enlightened the minds of your disciples by the gift of your Spirit of life and truth, surround the people of this congregation with your love and favour. Bless the ministry now begun to their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace that, through the preaching of your Word and the grace of your Sacraments they may be strengthened in all holy living and be kept by your power through faith unto salvation.

These things we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord who taught us to pray:

Ordination and Induction of Ministers

The Lord's Prayer.

The minister rises from his knees and the Moderator addresses him in these words:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church and by authority of this presbytery we do hereby declare you duly (*ordained to the office of the pastoral Ministry and*) inducted into the pastoral charge of this congregation and parish and entitled to all the rights and privileges belonging to it, and in token of that we give you the right hand of fellowship.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

The Aaronic Blessing (Rejoice! 352) is sung.

The Moderator together with the members of presbytery shall give the newly inducted minister the right hand of fellowship.

A hymn such as Pour out Your Spirit from on high (Rejoice! 478) may be sung.

The minister who preaches the sermon shall give a solemn charge to the minister and the people setting out their respective duties from the Word of God using such scriptures as:

To the minister: 2 Timothy 4:1, 2; Colossians 1:9b-12

To the congregation: 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 and 23-24

To both: Philippians 2:1-11,

or other relevant sections from the pastoral epistles.

Or

the following charges may be used:

CHARGE TO A NEWLY-INDUCTED MINISTER

The minister shall say:

Forasmuch as you, N..... have been called by Almighty God in his fatherly love to the ministry of the Word and Sacraments and ordained by the Church and have now been appointed to the Pastoral Charge of I charge you anew in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to walk worthy of the vocation to

which you are called, with all humility, with long suffering, forbearance and peaceful behaviour, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the upbuilding of the Body of Christ.

Take heed to yourself and to the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made you overseer. Love Christ and feed his flock, taking the oversight of it, not as one who lords it over the people committed to you but being an example to all in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in purity.

Give attention to reading, to exhortation and to teaching. Do the work of an evangelist. Do not neglect the gift which is in you. Endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Pray always, watching with all perseverance. Thus shall you save both yourself and those who hear you; and in that day when the Chief Shepherd shall appear you shall receive a crown of glory which will never fade away.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that Good Shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect in every good work to do his will working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION

The minister shall say:

Brothers and sisters of this congregation, you have heard the solemn vows which N..... has taken, and the obligations laid on him as your minister in the Lord. I therefore charge you to honour and uphold him, in virtue of his office and authority as a minister of Christ, set over you to lead and guide you in the true way of life.

Do not neglect meeting together in worship. Be hearers and doers of the word. Avail yourselves of the sacraments. Use your spiritual gifts for the building up of the Body of Christ. Seek the blessing and counsel of the Lord, and encourage your minister with your love and fellowship.

Be generous and sacrificial in your giving for the proclamation of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Continually remember your minister in your prayers, seeking for him, and for yourselves, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that you may be able to know and do the will of God.

Ordination and Induction of Ministers

These things strive to do, so that, at the appearing of the Lord Jesus, you all, pastor and people, may be presented, holy and blameless, by him before the face of the Father in the unity of the one Body, with exceeding joy.

And unto the same our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, be ascribed in the Church all honour and glory, might, majesty, dominion and blessing, now, henceforth and forever. Amen.

Psalm 122:6-9 (Rejoice! 304) may be sung, after which the Moderator pronounces the blessing:

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

The congregation remains standing while the members of Presbytery retire.

**AN ORDER FOR THE LICENSING
OF CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY
TO PREACH THE GOSPEL**

Call to worship:

For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favour and honour; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. O Lord Almighty, blessed is the man who trusts in you. (Psalm 84:11, 12)

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!' (Isaiah 52:7)

A hymn is sung.

Scripture reading.

Prayer:

Almighty and most merciful Father, we adore you as the giver of every good and perfect gift. Your goodness has created us; your generosity has sustained us; your fatherly discipline has rebuked and corrected us; your patience has continued towards us; your love has redeemed us. For these and all your mercies, we give you humble and hearty thanks. Grant to us with your gifts a heart to love you, and enable us to show our thankfulness for all your benefits by giving up ourselves to your service, and cheerfully submitting in all things and in all circumstances to your holy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture reading.

The Apostles' Creed:

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.**

Announcements.

Offering/Collection and dedication.

A hymn is sung.

Statement of purpose:

Friends in Christ: God by his Holy Spirit calls individuals to serve him according to the gifts bestowed upon them, and to particular servants he grants the ability to preach the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. To his church commandment has been given not only to pray for the increase in the number of Christian workers, but also to examine those who seek the office of preachers of the gospel, that those of pure heart, good conduct, sound learning, true Christian experience, and ability to speak in an edifying manner be found for the service of God's church. Therefore, it is appropriate that those who desire to give themselves to this ministry should not only prepare themselves by study, prayer, and good works, but should also have opportunity to exercise their gifts by the experience of preaching, and to approve themselves to God's people as those able to rightly handle the word of truth. According to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Australia, the oversight of these matters is committed to the Presbytery, which is to examine every candidate for the ordained ministry concerning his religious experience, his motives in seeking the ministry, and his proficiency in that knowledge which is necessary as a teacher of the truth revealed through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Licensing of Candidates for the Ministry

A narrative of the steps is read by the Clerk of Presbytery.

Questions to the candidate/s by the Moderator of Presbytery:

I am now required to ask you N..... to stand and answer the following questions:

1. Do you believe the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the only rule of faith and practice?

Response: I do.

2. Do you own and accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, as amended by the General Assembly, read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on the 24th day of July, 1901, as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures, and as a confession of your faith; and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power to assert, maintain, and defend the same?

Response: I do.

3. Do you own and accept the purity of worship as practised in this Church?

Response: I do.

4. Do you own the Presbyterian form of government to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto; and do you promise that, through the grace of God, you will firmly and constantly adhere to, and to the utmost of your power, in your station, assert, maintain, and defend the same?

Response: I do.

5. Are zeal for the glory of God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire to save souls, and not worldly interests or expectations (so far as you know your own heart), your great motives and chief inducements to the work of the Holy Ministry?

Response: They are.

6. Do you promise in the strength of Divine grace, to lead a holy and

Licensing of Candidates for the Ministry

circumspect life, faithfully fulfilling all appointments and instructions given you by competent authority, in accordance with the laws of this Church?

Response: I do.

7. All these things you profess and promise through grace, as you shall be answerable at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ?

Response: I do.

May Almighty God accept and bless you, and bestow upon you his enlivening Spirit, that those things which you have purposed in your heart you may be enabled to fulfil, to the glory of his holy name and the upbuilding of his church. Amen.

The signing of the Formula by the candidate/s.

The Moderator shall call upon the candidate/s to sign the formula, saying:

You are now required to sign the formula as a seal to these vows which you have made.

The Presbytery Clerk may read the formula and shall direct the licentiate/s in signing the formula.

Licensing prayer by the Moderator:

O Lord God Almighty, whose name is holy, we thank you for the gift of your Son Jesus Christ, and for the word of your truth by which he has been revealed to us as Saviour.

We praise you that in him you have called us into fellowship with your people. We bless you for your love towards your church. You have been her strength in weakness, her light in darkness, her defence in the day of evil, and the source of her patience, faith and triumph in all ages.

We thank you for the gospel ministry, and for the assurance which you have given to all your faithful servants that, in their witnessing for you, you will be with them always, even to the end of the world. O God, our Heavenly Father, we ask you to give your promised grace to these your servants,

Licensing of Candidates for the Ministry

N..... whom now, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we do solemnly set apart for the preaching of the gospel. Provide *them* with all necessary gifts of the Holy Spirit. Enrich *them* with all knowledge and the ability to speak. Fill *them* with the wisdom and gentleness of Christ. Make *them* good examples to other believers in faith, love, holiness, speech and conduct. Make *them* wise in the winning of souls to faith in Jesus Christ. May they be guides to those who are in darkness, supporters of the oppressed, helpers of the sick, poor and needy. Bless all to whom *they* shall minister your saving truth; may *they* be built up in the faith; enabled to lead godly lives; guided into many forms of Christian service, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

To him who by means of his power working in us is able to do so much more than we can ever ask for, or even think of: to God be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus for all time, forever and ever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Declaration of Licensing by the Moderator:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, and by authority of this Presbytery, I hereby declare you N..... duly licensed to preach the gospel and may the blessings of God rest upon you and the Spirit of Christ fill your heart. I give you the right hand of fellowship as a preacher of the gospel.

The right hand of fellowship is then extended by the members of Presbytery to those duly licensed.

Bible presentation to licentiate/s:

Accept this Bible, and may God grant you faithfulness to the Word of God as you teach the gospel of his grace, and the strength to be an example of faithful and holy living.

A hymn is sung.

Address and Charge to the licentiate/s.

A hymn is sung.

Licensing of Candidates for the Ministry

Benediction by the Moderator:

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 amongst you, and remain with you always.

The three-fold Amen is sung.

AN ORDER FOR THE ORDINATION AND INDUCTION OF ELDERS

The Worship of God is celebrated according to the usual order.

The following are appropriate Bible readings: Exodus 18; 1 Corinthians 12.

After the praise following the sermon, the Session shall gather behind the communion table, the elder-elect standing before the table.

The minister shall say:

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the Session of this parish, having judged it proper to increase the number of elders, has proceeded according to the laws of the church, and the congregation has elected N....., of whose godliness and fitness for the office they are persuaded.

No objections to *his* life and doctrine have been made after due notice. Therefore, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church we are gathered to ordain and/or induct *him* into *his* office in this parish.

The importance of the office of the eldership was recognised by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster as follows:

As there were in the Jewish Church elders of the people, joined with the priests and Levites in the government of the church; so Christ, who has instituted government and governors ecclesiastical in the church, has furnished some in his church, besides the ministers of the word, with gifts for government and with commission to execute the same, when called thereunto; who are to join with the minister in the government of the church, which officers reformed churches commonly call elders.

The duties of elders are more particularly:

To set an example of a Christian life, at home, at work and at church.

To teach from God's Word as opportunity is presented, and to exercise pastoral care among God's people.

Ordination and Induction of Elders

To join with the minister in spiritual leadership and decision-making and exercising biblical discipline in the local congregation through the work of the Session.

To participate in Presbyteries and General Assemblies when commissioned to them.

In this act of ordination and admission, the Presbyterian Church of Australia, as part of the holy catholic Church, worshipping one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, affirms anew its belief in the gospel of the sovereign grace and love of God, wherein through Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, incarnate, crucified and risen, he freely offers to all people, upon repentance and faith, forgiveness of sins, renewal by the Holy Spirit, and eternal life, and calls them to labour in the fellowship of the faith for the advancement of the kingdom of God throughout the world.

The Presbyterian Church of Australia acknowledges the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the supreme rule of faith and life, and holds as its subordinate standard the Westminster Confession of Faith, read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on 24th day of July, 1901, recognising liberty of opinion on such points of doctrine not essential to the doctrine therein taught, and claiming the right, in dependence on the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, to formulate, interpret, or modify its subordinate standard, always in agreement with the Word of God and the essential doctrines contained in the subordinate standard.

I now ask the members of the congregation:

Do you rejoice in the election of N..... to the office of ruling elder in this congregation, and do you promise that you will render *him* all due respect and encouragement in the discharge of this office?

Will you please signify your assent by saying: I do.

Will the congregation please stand.

Addressing the elder(s) elect the minister shall say:

Ordination and Induction of Elders

N..... you are required now to answer the questions appointed by the church.

1. Do you believe the Word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the only rule of faith and practice?

Response: I do.

2. Do you own and accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, as amended by the General Assembly, and read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on the 24th day of July, 1901, as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures and as a confession of your faith, and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power to assert, maintain and defend the same?

Response: I do.

3. Do you own and accept the purity of worship as practised in this Church?

Response: I do.

4. Do you own the Presbyterian form of government to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto; and do you promise that through the grace of God you will firmly and constantly adhere to, and to the utmost of your power, in your station, assert, maintain and defend the same?

Response: I do.

5. Do you adhere to your acceptance of the call of this congregation, to exercise among them the office of ruling elder?

Response: I do.

6. Do you engage through divine grace to discharge with diligence and faithfulness the various duties of your office, watching over the flock, showing yourself a pattern of good works, and giving a conscientious attendance on the meetings of Session, Presbytery and Assembly, when duly called so to do?

Response: I do.

Ordination and Induction of Elders

7. All these things you profess and promise through grace, as you shall be answerable at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Response: I do.

May Almighty God bless you and give you grace faithfully to fulfil these vows.

The Moderator shall call upon the elder to sign the formula, saying:

You are now required to sign the formula as a seal to these vows which you have made.

The Formula is signed:

The Session Clerk may read the Formula.

The minister shall then offer the Ordination and/or Induction prayer during which the minister and elders may lay hands on the elder elect.

O eternal and ever blessed God, you rule your church by your Spirit and you accept the service of faithful men and women; we commend to you (*these*) whom we now ordain (*and/or*) induct to the office of the eldership in this congregation.

Endue *him* with your Spirit. May *his* manner of life be worthy of the gospel of our Lord Christ. Make *him* pure in heart, unselfish in service, and zealous for the advancement of your Kingdom. Keep *him* faithful to the end, that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, *he* may receive a crown of glory that fades not away, through Jesus Christ our Lord, in whose words we humbly pray:

The Lord's Prayer.

The minister shall then say:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church and by the authority of this Session I declare you - N..... to be ordained (*and/or*) inducted to the office of the eldership and I commend you to the grace of God in the discharge of all your duties.

Ordination and Induction of Elders

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit rest upon you and abide with you always. Amen.

And now the members of this Session give you the right hand of fellowship....

Then a charge may be given to the new elders and to the congregation.

Then a psalm such as Psalm 122 (6 - 9) (Rejoice! 304) shall be sung, or a suitable hymn.

The blessing shall then be given.

AN ORDER FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF A DEACONESS

The setting apart of a Deaconess by the Presbytery shall take place in the context of public worship.

Appropriate Lessons are 1 Cor. 12:4-11, 2 Tim. 1:3-14

Then shall the Moderator say:

We now proceed to the setting apart of N..... as a deaconess.

Then shall the Convener of the Candidates Committee, or other member of Presbytery, present her, saying:

N..... has satisfactorily completed the course of training prescribed by the General Assembly, and is considered an appropriate person to exercise this ministry.

Then shall the Moderator say to her:

N..... in the Scriptures of the New Testament it is recorded that women ministered to our Lord Jesus Christ during his earthly ministry. The Apostle Paul acknowledged with gratitude the help he received in his labours from Christian women. From the beginning until now God has blessed his Church with the good works and lives of faithful and devoted women.

And now, as you intend to devote yourself to this service, we exhort you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to reflect on the work to which you are called. It is the work of a Deaconess to minister to the welfare of those to whom she is sent; to assist the Ministers of the Word and Sacraments; to seek, advise, and pray for those who require help in all kinds of trouble; to instruct the young, and to encourage all to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord.

I now ask you to stand and answer the appointed questions.

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

Response: I do.

Commissioning of a Deaconess

2. Do you adhere to the doctrinal standards of the Presbyterian Church of Australia?

Response: I do.

3. Do you promise, depending on God's grace, faithfully and prayerfully to fulfill your duties?

Response: I do.

4. Do you promise to seek the unity and peace of the Church, and to submit to the authority of those to whom the Church has committed the direction of your work?

Response: I do.

Then shall the Moderator say:

May Almighty God bless you, and fill you with his Spirit, that you may be able to fulfill your promises, to the glory of his holy Name and the building up of his Church. Amen.

Let us pray:

Direct us by your Holy Spirit, we pray, O Lord, and assist us with your grace as in the Name of your blessed Son we set apart N..... to be a Deaconess in your Church. Bless her as she dedicates herself to your service, and give her the grace of the Holy Spirit. Grant her the ability to understand and to communicate your truth to others, teaching the young, guiding the perplexed, and leading the lost to Christ. Let your word on her lips bring good news to the weary and burdened, and comfort to those who mourn.

Help her in her work and witness; so that she may not waver from the faith but may complete her life's work with joy and finally receive the full reward in your heavenly kingdom.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer:

Commissioning of a Deaconess

The Moderator shall say:

In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, and by authority of this Presbytery, I now declare you set apart to the office of Deaconess.

I exhort you in the Name of the Lord to be faithful to your work, and may the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, rest upon you and abide with you always. Amen.

An address to the Deaconess may follow.

The Moderator shall say:

Let us pray:

Almighty God, who is the giver of all spiritual grace and the author of everlasting life; look with favour upon Your servant, N..... and grant her grace, that she may know your will and have the strength to do it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn.

The Blessing:

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

AN ORDER FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF A HOME MISSIONARY

The Moderator of Presbytery shall conduct the Service, and may be assisted by other members of Presbytery.

The Home Missionary shall take his place before the Presbytery.

A hymn such as Christ is made the sure foundation. (Rejoice! 293) shall be sung.

Then the Moderator shall read some Scripture sentences such as:

The Lord is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. (Psalm 145:18)

Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. (I Chronicles 16:10)

Let us pray:

Almighty and most merciful God, without whom we can do no good thing; grant us your grace, that our prayers may be acceptable to you.

We humbly confess that we are not worthy to approach you, or to do anything in your Name. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed. Forgive us, we pray, and cleanse us from all our sins through the merits of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Saviour and Lord.

Everlasting God, you created us for yourself, and we can find rest only in you. Grant us purity of heart and strength of purpose, so that no selfish motive may hinder us from knowing your will, and no weakness from doing it. In your light may we see light clearly, and in your service find perfect freedom.

Revive your work, O Lord, and by the power of your Holy Spirit in the lives of your faithful people, cause your Church to increase in righteousness, truth and peace, that your way may be known on earth, your salvation among all nations, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Commissioning of a Home Missionary

Appropriate Bible readings, such as Isaiah 6:1-13; Matthew 5: 1-16; 2 Tim. 3:16-4:5.

Then the Apostles' Creed may be said:

Let us stand and make confession of our faith in the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again 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.**

A psalm or hymn may be sung, such as Lord, her watch Your Church is keeping (Rejoice! 369)

Sermon.

A psalm or hymn may be sung, such as I'm not ashamed to own my Lord (Rejoice! 408).

The Moderator shall say:

We meet as a Presbytery by authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, to commission N..... as a Home Missionary. When the Lord Jesus ascended into heaven, he equipped his people for the task of building up the body of Christ.

Commissioning of a Home Missionary

As we now commission N....., we reaffirm our belief in the Gospel of the sovereign grace and love of God. In this Gospel, God offers all people, upon repentance and faith, forgiveness of sins, renewal by the Holy Spirit, and eternal life through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord. God commands all who share this faith to work together in Christ for the advancement of his kingdom throughout the world.

The Presbyterian Church of Australia acknowledges the Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, to be the supreme rule of faith and life.

The Presbyterian Church of Australia holds as its subordinate standard the Westminster Confession of Faith, read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on 24th day of July, 1901, recognising liberty of opinion on such points of doctrine not essential to the doctrine therein taught, and claiming the right, in dependence on the promised guidance of the Holy Spirit, to formulate, interpret, or modify its subordinate standard, always in agreement with the Word of God and the essential doctrines contained in the subordinate standard.

The Home Missionary shall stand and answer the following questions:

1. Do you believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

Response: I do.

2. Do you believe the Word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, to be the only rule of faith and life?

Response: I do.

3. Do you own and accept the Westminster Confession of Faith, read in the light of the Declaratory Statement contained in the Basis of Union adopted by this Church on the 24th day of July, 1901, as an exhibition of the sense in which you understand the Holy Scriptures, and as a confession of your faith; and do you engage firmly and constantly to adhere thereto and to the utmost of your power to assert, maintain, and defend the same?

Commissioning of a Home Missionary

Response: I do.

4. Do you own the Presbyterian form of government to be founded on the Word of God and agreeable thereto; and do you promise, under the authority of the appropriate Assembly Committee, to be subject to this Presbytery, and to give all due obedience and respect to the Moderator and Session of the parish in which you serve?

Response: I do.

5. Do you promise to seek the unity and peace of this Church; to uphold its doctrine, worship, government, and discipline; and to demonstrate a Christ-like spirit towards all the followers of the Lord?

Response: I do.

6. Do you promise, depending on God's grace, faithfully and prayerfully to fulfil the duties of a Home Missionary, seeking in all things the advancement of the kingdom of God?

Response: I do.

The person to be commissioned shall kneel, and the Moderator shall pray:

Direct us by your Holy Spirit, we pray, O Lord, and assist us with your grace as in the Name of your blessed Son we commission N..... to be a Home Missionary in your Church. Bless him as he dedicates himself to your service, and give him the grace of the Holy Spirit. Grant him the ability to understand and communicate your truth to others, teaching the young, guiding the perplexed, and leading the lost to Christ. Let your word on his lips bring good news to the weary and burdened, and comfort to those who mourn.

Help him in his work and witness; so that he may not waver from the faith but may complete his life's work with joy and finally receive the full reward in your heavenly kingdom.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer.

Commissioning of a Home Missionary

The Moderator shall say:

In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, we now commission you as a Home Missionary and give you the right hand of fellowship.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Then the Moderator and the other members of Presbytery will shake hands with the Home Missionary.

The Moderator, or another appointed to do so, may give some words of counsel to the newly commissioned Home Missionary, who shall stand to receive them.

A psalm or hymn may be sung such as All praise to our redeeming Lord (Rejoice! 307).

Benediction.

AN ORDER FOR THE DEDICATION OF CHRISTIAN TEACHERS

Welcome.

Call to Worship: 2 Peter 1:2.

Hymn such as “Who is on the Lord’s side?” (Rejoice! 456)

Prayer:

Scripture Reading: 2 Peter 1:3-11.

Hymn such as “How shall the young direct their way?” (Rejoice! 286)

Christian Teacher’s Dedication.

Those appointed to teach shall stand as their names are read by the Session Clerk and come to the front of the church.

*Scriptures passages such as the following may be read:
Deuteronomy 6:4-7; John 13:34; Matthew 28:19,20.*

Then, the minister shall address the teachers:

Friends, you have been approved by the Session to serve as Christian teachers.

You will announce God’s Word to each new generation, and tell of Jesus Christ, so others may know him, love him, and live his truth in the world.

Minister:

Do you trust Jesus Christ as your Saviour, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

*Teachers Respond: **We do.***

Minister:

Do you promise to study the Scriptures and the teachings of the church, so

Dedication of Christian Teachers

that with imagination and love you may serve the Lord, by calling people to faith in Christ and training his disciples?

*Teachers Respond: **We do.***

Minister:

By the authority of the Session, you are commissioned to teach on behalf of the church. Be energetic, honest and faithful to Jesus Christ, your Lord!

The whole congregation joins in the following prayer:

God of our Fathers: In every age you have appointed teachers to tell of your power, justice and love. We thank you for brothers and sisters in faith, who will teach your ways. Fill them with your Holy Spirit, that knowing your Son our Lord, they may speak his truth, and with us live the new life, serving neighbours, obedient to your commandments; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Minister: The truth of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

The Apostles or Nicene Creed may be said.

Prayer of Intercession.

Offering/Collection and Prayer.

Hymn such as For Your Gift of God the Spirit (Rejoice! 273) or Spirit of God, Unseen as the Wind (Rejoice! 272)

Sermon.

Hymn such as Forth in Your Name, O Lord, I go (Rejoice! 363)

Benediction and Three-fold Amen.

AN ORDER FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF A YOUTH WORKER

Welcome.

Responsive Call to Worship (from Romans 12:6-11; 1 Cor 12:4-7)

Minister: We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.

If a person's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him lead diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully. Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord.
(Romans 12:6-11)

Minister: There are different gifts.

ALL: But it is the same Spirit who gives them.

Minister: Each one is given a gift by the Spirit.

ALL: To use it for the common good.

Hymn such as At the Name of Jesus (Rejoice! 123).

Prayer:

Scripture Reading: such as Romans 1:7b-17.

Message.

Hymn such as Revive Your Church, O Lord (Rejoice! 298).

Testimony by Appointee.

Commissioning of Youth/Church Worker

Prayer of Commissioning and Declaration of Appointment.

Words of Exhortation:

To the Appointee:

Dear fellow servant in Christ, be an example, therefore, in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit and in faith. Do not neglect the gift that God has entrusted to you. Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved - a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth. Be diligent in prayer, remembering that without Christ you can do nothing.

To the Congregation:

Dear friends in Christ, receive N..... as a fellow worker and servant of Jesus Christ. Support N..... in his Christian service and responsibility in the life of the church. Encourage N..... by your words and prayers because you are co-workers with him in the service of Christ and his kingdom.

Hymn such as You servants of God, your Master proclaim (Rejoice! 148)

Benediction and Three-Fold Amen.

AN ORDER FOR THE COMMISSIONING OF A MISSIONARY / MISSIONARY FAMILY

Missionaries should be commissioned by the Presbytery in which the missionary or missionary family resides, with due attention being given to the participation in the Commissioning Service by members of the local congregation, the Partner Society (where applicable) and the APWM.

Simple Order for Commissioning:

Opening Scriptures.

Hymn.

Prayer.

Scripture Readings.

Explanation of the steps that led to the commissioning and description of the ministry envisaged (perhaps using visual materials - video, transparencies, or a person from the new culture)

Personal testimony from the missionary/missionary family

Hymn.

Sermon.

Commissioning Presentation of support gifts (or collection of monies for missionaries)

Hymn.

Blessing, said or sung.

During the course of the Service the Moderator or another participant shall say:

In this act of commissioning / re-commissioning our Church acknowledges that Jesus Christ our Lord calls his people to be his witnesses throughout the world.

N *have* heard the call from Jesus to follow him. Jesus has called for

Commissioning of a Missionary / Missionary Family

labourers to be thrust out into the harvest. *They have* been convinced that he wants *them* to be labour in those “fields which are ready for harvest” as *missionaries* with

Dear N....., fellow worker/s in Christ: We rejoice that you have heard the command of the Master to go and serve in his kingdom. In his name, we are about to commission / recommission you to the work to which you are designated, and to commend you to the care of Jesus, whose commission you are to bear. But first, you will reaffirm your faith and purpose by answering the questions put to you:

1. Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and do you confess anew that the Lord Jesus Christ is your Saviour and Lord?

Response: I/We do.

2. Do you believe in the Gospel of love and grace of God, which declares that only through Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, he freely offers forgiveness and eternal life, and calls us into the fellowship and service of his kingdom?

Response: I/We do.

3. Are love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire to commend him by your word and life, so far as you know your own heart, your chief motives for accepting this opportunity to serve?

Response: They are.

4. Do you promise, with the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, to walk worthily of your calling, to discharge faithfully and cheerfully the duties of your office, and to yield yourselves to the authority of those to whom the Church has committed the direction of your work?

Response: I/We do.

5. Do you now confess and promise these things, through grace, as you would answer to your Lord?

Response: I/We do.

Commissioning of a Missionary / Missionary Family

Since no-one alone, is able to perform all these things, let us now pray God's strengthening for N

Prayer for Missionary/Missionary family:

Father of power, love and mercy. We praise you for your grace in the Lord Jesus Christ that opened the way for our salvation and adoption into your family. We thank you for those who pointed us to the Way, the Truth and the Life. And now before us stand N..... (and their family) whose call to share Jesus Christ with others is confirmed by your church in this commissioning. Neither they nor we can know the testings, rigours, pressures and adventures that await them in the future. As we commit them to you in prayer, we do so with the confidence that through the ministry of the Holy Spirit in them they will continue to learn lessons of patience, strength and contentment in the knowledge that the grace of the Lord Jesus is sufficient for them, for his power is made perfect in their weakness.

Grant them safety in travel, diligence in adjustment to a new culture and the learning of a new language, grace in building friendships with others, integrity of life, a heart aflame for God, a constant passion to usher the lost into the kingdom of your dear Son, and a life of integrity and prayer that will demonstrate that they trust and rest in you alone.

O God, heed our prayer, and give rejoicing not only amongst angels that rejoice over sinners who repent, but also here amongst us, as these our dear friends are used as your servants in the place of your calling.

Keep us faithful as the home base in prayer, support, supply, communication and fellowship with those who separate from us, that we may be a team all serving the Lord our God, for the glory of your name alone.

Through Jesus Christ our Saviour and Lord. Amen.

After prayer the Moderator shall say:

In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, we declare you N to be commissioned / re-commissioned as a missionary/ missionaries of the Presbyterian Church in fellowship with the *Mission Society* for your ministry in *Country*. We commend you to the grace of God in the fulfilling of your loving service for your Lord and Saviour.

Commissioning of a Missionary / Missionary Family

And following the pattern of the Scriptures of the New Testament and as a sign of our partnership with you, we commission /re-commission you with the laying on of hands.

The Blessing: The Lord bless you and keep you .(Rejoice! 352)

*In the event of a missionary being a candidate for ordination (or is already ordained as a minister of the church), use the **QUESTIONS AT ORDINATION AND INDUCTION** as set out in the *GAA Code*.*

**AN ORDER FOR THE
DECOMMISSIONING OF A MISSIONARY /
MISSIONARY FAMILY**

In that the Presbytery commissions the missionary at the beginning of the term of service, it is appropriate that the Service of Decommissioning be in the hands of the same Presbytery (apart from what may transpire at the local congregational level). A Decommissioning Service could become part of an ordinary Presbytery meeting, occupying the space of about 45 minutes, with 20 minutes supper to follow, to allow special warmth of welcome home, prior to the resumption of other business. As an alternative, the Decommissioning Service could be organised by the Presbytery at the home congregation of the missionary/missionary family at a mutually suitable time.

Simple Order for Decommissioning of Missionaries:

Opening Scriptures.

Hymn.

Prayer.

Scripture Readings (possibly including Acts 14:21-28).

Report back to the church on the years of ministry by the missionary/missionary family.

Expression of thanks to the family, and praise to God (presentation of settling-back gift).

Prayer of Thanksgiving.

Hymn.

Sermon.

Hymn.

Conclusion of Service.

Expression of Thanks

N and N....., years ago your church, recognising the call of God to you, commissioned you to serve him in *Country*. There you have served him well. You are now aware of the struggles and joys of serving him amongst people of another culture. You have lived and declared the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, and have witnessed the power of the Spirit of God in turning some from idols to serve the living and true God. At the same time you have known the grievous experience of being a witness to your Lord, but as a result of that ministry have seen some turn away from the light of life and continue to walk in darkness. Through the rigours of missionary life, you have learned more of the sovereign purposes of God who has given you the grace to cry, 'O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out'.

You have communicated with us, educated us, thanked us for our support, and asked us to keep praying. Sometimes you have helped us to suffer godly shame in respect to our comforts, and you have pressed us to take stock of our priorities. It has been a privilege for us to be your partners in mission.

On behalf of the church we thank you, and trust that as the Lord opens doors for new ministry here in Australia, you will continue to grow in grace, and be a vessel of great usefulness to Christ in your new sphere of service.

Decommissioning Prayer

Our gracious redeemer God. We approach your throne boldly through our only mediator, our Lord Jesus Christ. We thank you for calling us your own, and for the pathway along which you have led us as we have journeyed to the city whose architect and builder is our God.

We have appreciated our brother/sister who has/have been the extension of our arm in their faithful witness to Jesus in *Country*. Thank you for watching over them and keeping them safe, for the ministry of your Spirit who convicting of sin, righteousness and judgment, has kept them growing in grace, holiness and knowledge. Thank you O Father, that our friend/s have been your instruments of grace to lead others to the Saviour of their souls, and to build up others in the most holy faith.

Decommissioning of a Missionary / Missionary Family

(When we commissioned them, their children were but 'little ones', and now we see them standing before us as young adults. O God be gracious to them and lead them on through life's pilgrimage in such a way that they will 'love the Lord their God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength'.)

Bless them richly as they settle back into life here in Australia. Open doors into new friendships and ministry such that they will continue strongly to use the gifts that you have entrusted to them for the glory of your name.

AMEN.