

Commissioning Service

This service can be used during a service of worship in a participant's congregation. Duplicate and send to each participant, or to participants' ministers, before the trip.

Worship Leader: *(addressing the participant or participants):*

Throughout history, God has called women and men to particular forms of ministry. Today we acknowledge the call God has made to you to take your faith journey into a new place, to experience first hand the joys and sorrows, hopes and dreams, needs and gifts of people created in the image of God and whom God loves, and by your travel to extend your own sense of being God's family throughout the world. As we send you forth, we ask you these questions:

Do you receive this call as a gift of God's Spirit and will you rely on that Holy Spirit to support, sustain, comfort and challenge you on the journey you are making?

Trip Participant: I do and I will.

Worship Leader: Will you be faithful in your participation in this experience, seeking to build Christian community among fellow travelers, remaining attentive to both the agenda of the trip and to the spontaneous intervention of God's surprising Spirit as you go, and as fully as possible bearing witness to the love, compassion, and justice of Jesus Christ wherever you find yourself?

Trip Participant: I will.

Worship Leader: Will you return and share the knowledge, wisdom, impressions, questions, and imperatives for action which are the fruit of the journey you are taking?

Trip Participant: I will.

Worship Leader: *(addressing the congregation):*

Will you, the home congregation of (this/these) traveler(s), hold them in prayer, keep them close in your awareness and hearts, and surround them with the love of God while they are away, thereby maintaining our connection and unity in the body of Christ?

Congregation: We will.

Worship Leader: Will you receive (this/these) participant(s), [namely] _____, as they return and listen to their stories, encourage them in their growth, and support them as they reconnect with family and friends and with this congregation?

Congregation: We will.

Worship Leader: Let us join together in unison prayer.

[A laying-on of hands on the heads of the participant(s) may be appropriate here as they receive this prayer of blessing.]

All: Holy God, you are at once in this place and in all places. We ask your blessing on _____ and all those who will travel to _____. May they sense your presence and power as they meet new people and learn new things. May they hear your living Word through the voices of persons who speak your truth and seek your peace. May they experience the mystery of the body of Christ, which is alive across national boundaries and cultural differences. May they be encouraged and renewed daily by your energetic Spirit so that the refreshment of your grace is present with them always. Amen.

Worship Leader: Go then, in the name of God, in the way of Jesus, and in the trust of the Holy Spirit. Be in joy, be in justice, be in peace each step of your way.

["Here I Am, Lord" is an appropriate hymn with which to close this commissioning service.]