

Commissioning of a Lay Pastor - A Service of Worship

When persons are presented for commissioning as lay pastors, it is appropriate that the presbytery in which they are to serve use this liturgy within a complete Service for the Lord's Day or as a separate service. When included in a complete service, this liturgy should follow the sermon and precede celebration of Eucharist.

The moderator and those whose who are to be commissioned may gather at the baptismal font or pool.

SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE

The moderator leads the people:

We, who are many, are one body in Christ,

Romans 12:5-8

and individually we are members one of another.

We have gifts that differ
according to the grace given to us:
prophecy, in proportion to faith;
ministry, in ministering,
the teacher, in teaching;
the exhorter, in exhortation,
the giver, in generosity;
the leader, in diligence;
the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

**Lead a life worthy of the calling
to which you have been called,
making every effort to maintain
the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
There is one body and one Spirit,
just as we were called to the one hope of our calling,
one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
one God and Father of all,
who is above all and through all and in all.**

Ephesians 4:1-6

The moderator continues:

The Presbytery of N. is satisfied that N. has met all requirements and completed all preparations prescribed in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

We now commission N. as a lay pastor to serve in and for _____.

[CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS]

The commissioned lay pastor answers the questions required by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

I do.

Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?

I do.

Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?

I do and I will.

Will you fulfill your commission in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?

I will.

Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?

I will.

Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?

I will.

Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?

I do.

Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?

I will.

Will you be a faithful commissioned lay pastor, watching over the people, providing for their worship? In your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

I will, with God's help.

PRAYER

Almighty God,
in every age You have chosen servants
to speak your Word and lead your loyal people.
We thank you for N.
whom you have called to serve you
as commissioned lay pastor
in and for N.
Give *him/her* gifts to do *his/her* particular work.
Fill *him/her* with your Holy Spirit,
so that *he/she* may have the same mind
that was in Christ Jesus,
and be a faithful disciple throughout life.

All may pray together:

**God of grace,
in baptism you have called us
to a common ministry
as ambassadors of Christ,
trusting us with the message of reconciliation.
Give us courage and discipline
to follow where your servants rightly lead us,
that together we may declare your wonderful deeds
and show your love to the world;
through Jesus Christ the Lord of all.
Amen.**

The moderator greets the lay pastor:

On behalf of the Presbytery of N.,
I welcome you to this ministry.
May God's Holy Spirit empower you
in the ministry of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Amen.

To initiate the relationship between a lay pastor and a Church the liturgy for Commissioning to Ministry Within a Congregation may be adapted.