



The Evangelical
Church Alliance

Minister's Manual

The Evangelical Church Alliance

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The Evangelical Church Alliance
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Preface

The Board of Directors of the Evangelical Church Alliance is pleased to present this Minister's Manual for your use as you carry out your ministerial duties.

It is our prayer that God will use this manual to encourage, comfort and strengthen evangelical Christians to whom God has privileged you to minister in His name throughout the world.

What is the Evangelical Church Alliance?

The Evangelical Church Alliance is a worldwide organization serving evangelical ministers.

The Mission of the Evangelical Church Alliance is to spread the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and to build up the church by carrying out the Great Commission as stated in Matthew 28:19-20 by credentialing, training, encouraging, and supporting ministers of the Gospel who are committed to the infallibility and inerrancy of the Bible as the only rule for faith and practice.

Origin

The Evangelical Church Alliance was founded under the name “World’s Faith Missionary Association” in 1887. Following the death of its founder, C.S. Hanley, the association split and was reorganized. The group that would later become the ECA, incorporated under the laws of the State of Missouri on March 28, 1928 and retained the name “The World’s Faith Missionary Association.” Later, a constitution was adopted by delegates in convention and official action was taken to choose a name more in keeping with the organization’s basis of unity. The

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name chosen was “The Fundamental Ministerial Association.”

On July 21, 1958, an Annual Convention was held on the campus of Trinity Seminary and Bible College, in Chicago, Illinois. A more comprehensive constitution was adopted and the name was changed to the “Evangelical Church Alliance.”

Nature of the Organization

We are interdenominational and non-sectarian in character. We believe at certain periods of history and in various places, God raised up leaders for the purpose of calling men and women to Himself. From these sprung the various denominations which God has used in effectively spreading the Gospel. We are not anti-denominational. Many of our members minister in denominational churches.

However, we also believe that God has called others to minister outside the confines of the established denominations and that God has raised up the Evangelical Church Alliance to provide such ministers with credentials from a recognized ecclesiastical body.

What is the Evangelical Church Alliance?

To become a member of the ECA, one does not have to resign from other churches or reputable organizations. We are not competitive, but cooperative. Realizing that in unity there is strength, ECA members have allowed denominational differences to fade into insignificance and have joined hands in the interest of evangelical Christianity.

The ECA is a body of evangelical ministers who hold membership in the ECA while they labor in their respective churches and para-church ministries. However, independent and non-profit organizations may belong to the ECA and enjoy the communion and association of those of kindred mind without surrendering their independence.

We endeavor to be more than an ecclesiastical institution issuing yearly credentials to Christian workers. We are vitally interested in the welfare and progress of each member and seek to be of as much help, comfort, and inspiration to one another as possible.

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Purpose of the Organization

Our purpose is to promote evangelical Christianity throughout the world. This we endeavor to do by:

1. Licensing and ordaining to the ministry those who are qualified and providing them with credentials from a recognized ecclesiastical body.
2. Providing courses of study, through The Bible Extension Institute, for those who have not had the opportunity of a seminary or Bible School training.
3. Providing an organization for independent churches and non-profit organizations for communion and association with other churches of like mind while still retaining complete autonomy.
4. Providing an organization in which members can find companionship through correspondence, regional and annual conferences.
5. Cooperating with churches in finding new pastors when vacancies occur.

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The Bible Extension Institute

Independent study curriculum established through the ECA for those who do not academically qualify for ordination or licensing.

Persons in this situation, are automatically enrolled in the BEI or may complete the equivalent of the courses required through an approved educational institution.

The BEI also serves those who have not had opportunity for formal Bible education but want to increase their knowledge of the Bible and related ministry subjects.

Individuals may enroll in the BEI by completing an application and paying the enrollment fee.

Tenets of Faith

The ECA was founded by Godly men who were moved to band together for the purpose of promoting evangelical Christianity throughout the world. They

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were motivated by a strong persuasion that the Bible, consisting of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testaments, is the divinely inspired and inerrant Word of God, that the men who wrote it were moved by the Holy Ghost, that in its original manuscripts and languages it is without error, without contradiction, that it is historically accurate and scientifically correct, and that it is man's only and final word of authority in matters of faith and practice. They rejected the theory of organic evolution and affirmed that the opening chapters of the Book of Genesis contain the true account of creation and the beginning of life on this earth. They declared their belief in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, His death and bodily resurrection, His ascension into heaven, that the shedding of His blood on the Cross provides man's only remedy for sin, and they looked forward to His coming again to rule on earth as King of kings and Lord of lords.

All individuals, churches and Christian organizations applying for membership shall subscribe to the following Tenets of Faith, which can never be repealed, changed, varied, altered, amended, or modified.

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WE BELIEVE that both Old and New Testaments constitute the divinely inspired word of God, inerrant in the original languages and manuscripts.

WE BELIEVE in one God existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

WE BELIEVE that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, in order that He might reveal God and redeem sinful man.

WE BELIEVE that the Holy Spirit came forth from the Father and the Son to convict the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment; and to regenerate, sanctify, comfort and seal those who believe in Jesus Christ.

WE BELIEVE that man is totally depraved in that of himself he is utterly unable to remedy his lost condition.

WE BELIEVE that salvation is the gift

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of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose atoning blood was shed on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.

WE BELIEVE in the water baptism of believers, symbolizing the believer's union in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

WE BELIEVE in the observance of the Lord's Supper, commemorating the sacrifice of our Savior for all mankind.

WE BELIEVE the life of the believer is to be separated from the world by consistent conduct before God and man, and is to be in the world as life-giving light.

WE BELIEVE in the personal and visible and bodily return of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What is the Evangelical Church Alliance?

The Ministry

Jesus said to His disciples: "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you and ordained you." Every person considering the Gospel ministry as his life work should be certain he has been called of God. He should not choose the ministry as he would a profession or trade, for if he does he will neither be at peace nor fruitful.

The minister must not suppose that mere training or knowledge will properly equip him to do the work of a minister. He must remember that only after the disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit did they speak the Word of God with boldness. Let everyone tarry before God until he receives a definite directive for his life work.

ECA members are recognized by two classifications: Ordained Minister and Licensed Minister. Ordination requires additional ministry experience and education. The Licensed Minister does not have the authority to perform the wedding ceremony.

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Qualification for Membership

To be allowed entrance into the membership of the Evangelical Church Alliance, each candidate for ordination and licensing must meet the following requirements.

1. Subscribe to the ECA Tenets of Faith.
2. Be engaged in an established ministry that warrants licensing or ordination.
3. Have two years of practical ministry experience for licensing.
4. Have four years of practical ministry experience for ordination.
5. Agree to abide by the ECA Ministerial Ethics.
6. Have four individuals positively respond to a reference questionnaire.
7. Meet educational requirements established by the Credentials Committee.
8. Submit to a personal interview with a committee of three Ordained Ministers.
9. Meet any other qualifications established by the Board of Directors.

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No person will be received into membership or ordained to ministry by the Evangelical Church Alliance who, for reasons affecting his moral or religious character, has been refused ordination elsewhere, unless by unanimous agreement of the Board of Directors.

No candidate will be ordained until he first meets with an Ordination Council approved by the ECA Administration and has satisfied all written requirements.

Prior to the day appointed for ordination (at least a week prior if possible), the candidate must meet with the Ordination Council and be further examined orally concerning his gifts and abilities and give evidence that he fully understands the greatness and responsibility of the work to which he is called.

The most important questions when considering an applicant for membership are, "Does the applicant's life provide convincing testimony of his claim of being born again?" "Is there evidence of a genuine call to the ministry?" "Does the applicant possess a God-given ability to minister the Gospel with power to win souls to Christ?"

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Ministerial Ethics

1. The minister must keep in mind the nobility of the calling of God.
2. The minister must hold in high regard the reputation of Christian ministry. The minister's speech and actions should always strengthen that reputation.
3. The minister must not use his ministerial position for personal financial gain nor should he measure the services of his office monetarily.
4. The minister should dress in a manner that honors God.
5. The minister should always speak with good will of another minister. If called to supply the pulpit of a church with doctrinal tenets other than his own, he should carefully avoid making any statement at variance with the tenets of that church.
6. It should be the aim of the pastor to become

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part of the home while making calls. At the same time the minister should guard his own personal character. Ministers should be careful not to indulge in gossip while making pastoral calls.

7. The minister must be very cautious in his conduct toward the opposite sex. The careful minister will hold all people equal in his heart. There is neither "male nor female, bond nor free, Greek nor barbarian" in the kingdom of God.
8. The minister should be careful not to bring reproach on the calling by joining in marriage improper persons. (For clarification see "Marriage and Sexuality" page 43)
9. The confidential statements made to a minister by parishioners are privileged and should never be divulged without the consent of those making them.
10. It is unethical for a minister to take sides with factions in his parish.
11. It is unethical for a minister to interfere directly or indirectly with the work of

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another minister. The minister should be careful to avoid the charge of proselytizing.

12. As fellow laborers in the vineyard of the Lord and co-workers in His service, the relationship between ministers should be one of frankness and cooperation.

Concerning those who Differ

The ECA will not lower the standard of its Tenets of Faith. All uniting with the ECA must subscribe to these fundamentals. ECA members are urged to be tolerant toward those whose methods of worship and doctrinal views may vary from their own.

We practice the principles of the well known maxim: “In all things essential, unity; in things non-essential, liberty; and in all things, charity.”

“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.”

Ps. 133:1

Creeds and Declarations

The Apostle’s Creed

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord; Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; Suffered under Pontius Pilate; Was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; The third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father; From thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The Holy Catholic Church; the Communion of Saints; The Forgiveness of sins; The Resurrection of the body; And the Life everlasting. Amen.

The Declaration of Faith

I believe in God our Father, infinite in wisdom, goodness, and love, and in His Son, our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, Who for us men and our salvation lived and died and liveth evermore, exalted at the right hand of the Father, whose kingdom shall have no end.

Creeds and Declarations

And I believe in the Holy Spirit of God, the Lord and Giver of Life, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and with the Father and the Son exalted and glorified, taking of the things of Christ, revealing them to us; comforting, renewing, inspiring our spirits.

I believe in the persistence of personality and the immortality of the soul and I am resolved through the grace given unto me to order my life in the works of faith and in the ways of the holy commandments, looking for the victory of righteousness over evil, life over death, and for the life of the world to come. Amen

The Nicene Creed

I believe in One God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible;

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds; God of God; Light of Light; Very God of Very God; Begotten, not made; Being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; Who for us men, and our salvation, came down from heaven; And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man; And was crucified also for us

Calls to Worship

under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven; And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost; The Lord and Giver of Life; Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the prophets. And I believe one Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins. And I look for the Resurrection of the dead; And the life of the world to come. Amen.

Calls to Worship

“Make a joyful shout to the Lord, all you lands! Serve the Lord with gladness; Come before His presence with singing. Know that the Lord, He *is* God; *It is* He *who* has made us, and not we ourselves; *We* are His people and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, *And* into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him *and* bless His name. For the Lord *is* good; His mercy *is* everlasting, And his truth *endures* to all generations.” (Ps. 100)

Calls to Worship

“O give thanks to the Lord! Call upon His name; Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him, sing psalms to Him; Talk of all His wondrous works! Glory in His Holy name; Let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord!” (Ps. 105:1-3)

“Shout joyfully to the Lord, all the earth; Break forth in song, rejoice, and sing praises. Sing to the Lord with the harp, With the harp and the sound of a psalm, With trumpets and the sound of a horn; Shout joyfully before the Lord, the King. Let the sea roar, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell in it; Let the rivers clap *their* hands; Let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, For He is coming to judge the earth. With righteousness He shall judge the world, And the peoples with equity.” (Ps. 98:4-9)

“Bless the Lord, O my soul; And all that is within me, *bless* His holy name! Bless the Lord, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits; Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good *things*, *So that* your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” (Ps. 103:1-5)

Calls to Worship

“Oh come, let us sing to the Lord! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms. Oh come, let us worship and bow down; Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For He *is* our God, And we *are* the people of His pasture, And the sheep of His hand...” (Ps. 95:1,2,6,7)

“... The Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him.” (Hab. 2:20)

“I was glad when they said to me, Let us *go* into the house of the Lord.” (Ps.122:1)

“Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* For brethren to dwell together in unity! *It is* like the precious oil upon the head, Running down on the beard, The beard of Aaron, Running down on the edge of his garments. *It is* like the dew of Hermon, Descending upon the mountains of Zion; For there the Lord commanded the blessing - Life forevermore.” (Ps. 133)

“Oh sing to the Lord a new song! Sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless His name;

Calls to Worship

Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations. His wonders among all peoples. For the Lord *is* great and greatly to be praised; He *is* to be feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples *are* idols, But the Lord made the heavens. Honor and majesty *are* before Him; Strength and beauty *are* in His sanctuary.” (Ps. 96:1-6)

“...The hour is coming and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

God *is* Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” (Jn. 4:23,24)

“Oh, magnify the Lord with me, And let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, And delivered me from all my fears. They looked to Him and were radiant, And their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried out, and the Lord heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles. Oh, taste and see that the Lord *is* good;” (Ps. 34:3-6,8)

“Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the Lord, And He will have mercy on

Benedictions

him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.” (Is. 55:6,7)

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” (He. 4:14-16)

Benedictions

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.” (Ph. 4:23)

“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.” (2 Co. 13:14)

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, Be glory and majesty, Dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.” (Jude 24,25)

Benedictions

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

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Th. 5:23)

“So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.” (Ac. 20:32)

“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” (He. 13:20,21)

Ordination of a Minister

Ceremony for the Ordination of a Minister of the Gospel

The committee chosen to officiate at the ordination shall on the day appointed assemble and conduct a divine service in a decent and orderly fashion, and with due and solemn regard for the significance of the occasion.

The service may be opened with the singing of an appropriate hymn.

Prayer (The congregation standing).

The presiding minister may preach a sermon or explain the purpose of the service with appropriate remarks about the sacredness of the calling and the responsibility of the ministry.

The chairman of the Ordination Council shall then read, or have read by other members of the council, the following scriptures.

Ordination of a Minister

Ep. 4:11-13
2 Ti. 2: 1-4
2 Ti. 2:7
2 Ti. 2:14, 15
2 Ti. 2:23-26
2 Ti. 3:16,17
2 Ti. 4:1-5

Then the candidate for ordination, standing before the pulpit, shall make his vows of ordination according to the following form read by the chairman or person appointed:

The Evangelical Church Alliance is here assembled by its appointed representatives to ordain to the ministry Brother/Sister. _____

We have diligently inquired into the soundness of his/her doctrine, and the holiness of his/her life, gifts and ability. We therefore present him/her before you to receive ordination with the laying on of hands of the ministry, and to set him/her apart for this holy office.

Then the chairman shall address the candidate and shall say:

My brother/sister, you have heard how great a work is that of the ministry to which you are called. We are assured in the Holy Scriptures that he who

Ordination of a Minister

desires such an office desires a good thing, yet it is an office of great responsibility, and we lovingly remind you of that responsibility. We sincerely believe that you have already considered the responsibility of this office, and have rightly interpreted the call which you have heard as being from the Great Head of the Church. And we pray that you may approve yourself as a minister of the Gospel of Christ, sacred before both God and men.

And now, that this present company may understand your mind and hear your promises, and that this public profession of your faith and purpose may move you to do your full duty, we ask that you answer all these questions which we in the name of the Evangelical Church Alliance require of you before your ordination.

Do you acknowledge one God, who is revealed to us in Holy Scripture as God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

Answer: I do.

Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being God's divinely inspired revelation to man?

Ordination of a Minister

Answer: I do.

Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of your personal and private devotions, to keep yourself unspotted from the world, to live a life of purity of heart, and of daily prayer; that you may minister to others that which first of all you yourself have received through fellowship of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: I do.

Where the candidate is to be installed as Pastor of the church in which he is being ordained, the presiding minister may propose the following question. The people should rise and respond at the close:

Do you, the people of this congregation continue to profess your readiness to receive _____ whom you have called to be your pastor; receiving the Word of God from his/her lips with meekness and love; encouraging him/her in his/her labor; ministering to him/her of your substance; assisting his/her endeavors for your instruction and spiritual edification; so that by the mutual faith of him/her and you, the Kingdom of God may be advanced through this ministry? If so will you answer: "We do."

Ordination of a Minister

Answer: We do.

The candidate shall then kneel, and while the members of the Ordination Council lay their hands upon him/her, according to Apostolic example, one of them shall pray over him/her, solemnly ordaining him/her to the holy office of the Gospel Ministry.

With the candidate still kneeling, one of the ministers so appointed shall take the candidate's Bible and present it to (him/her) saying:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and by the authority of the Evangelical Church Alliance, I now declare you a duly ordained minister(s) of the Gospel of Christ and commit to you the authority to preach the Word, to administer the ordinances, and to bear rule in the church.

And we charge you therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word; be ready in season, and out of season; convince, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and teaching. Be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist (Pastor, missionary, mission worker), fulfill your ministry. And the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you. Amen.

Installation of a Pastor

The Candidate will rise and the minister giving the charge shall extend the right hand of fellowship, saying: _____, we welcome you into the Evangelical Church Alliance, and give you the right hand of fellowship to take part with us in the ministry.”

The other members of the Ordination Council will also extend the right hand of fellowship and offer words of greeting and encouragement.

The newly ordained minister may then be called upon to give a few words of testimony.

After the benediction the members of the congregation may be invited to come forward and give him/her their greetings and congratulations.

Ceremony for the Installation of a Pastor

The service may be opened by the singing of appropriate hymns, prayer and other exercises.

The retiring pastor (or guest minister, or other) then may preach a sermon or explain the purpose of

Installation of a Pastor

the service with appropriate remarks about the sacredness of the calling, responsibility and greatness of the ministry.

The chairman of the Installation Committee shall then read, or have read by others of the committee, the following scriptures:

Ep. 4:11-15
2 Ti. 2:1-4
2 Ti. 2:7
2 Ti. 2:14,15
2 Ti. 2:23-26
2 Ti. 3:16,17
2 Ti. 4:1-5

Then the candidate for installation, standing before the pulpit, shall make his vows according to the following form read by the chairman or appointed person:

Dearly beloved, we are assembled to install as pastor of this church, _____ .

We have diligently inquired into the soundness of his/her doctrine, and the holiness of his/her life, gifts and ability. We therefore present him/her before you to be set apart, with the laying on of hands, to this office to which we believe God has ordained him/her and you have chosen him/her.

Installation of a Pastor

Then the chairman shall say to the candidate:

_____, you have heard how great a work is that of ministry to which you are called. We are assured in the Holy Scripture that he who desires such an office desires a good thing, yet we remind you that it is an office of great responsibility. We pray that you have already considered the responsibility of this office and have rightly interpreted the call which you have heard as being from the Great Head of the Church. We pray on your behalf that you may approve yourself as a minister of the Gospel of Christ, sacred before both God and men.

And now, that this congregation may understand your mind and hear your promises, and that this your public profession of your faith and purpose may move you to do your full duty, you shall answer clearly to all these things which we require of you before your installation.

Do you acknowledge one God, who is revealed to us in Holy Scripture as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit?

Installation of a Pastor

Answer: I do.

Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being God's divinely inspired revelation to man?

Answer: I do.

Do you believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became man without ceasing to be God, in order to reveal God and redeem sinful men?

Answer: I do.

Do you believe that the Holy Spirit came forth from the Father, and the Son to convict the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and to regenerate, sanctify, comfort and empower those who believe in Jesus Christ?

Answer: I do.

Do you believe that salvation is the gift of God brought to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose atoning blood was shed on the cross for the forgiveness of sins, and that there is salvation in none other?

Installation of a Pastor

Answer: I do.

Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of your personal and private devotions, to keep yourself unspotted from the world, to live a life of purity of heart, and of daily prayer; that you may minister to others which you have first received through fellowship with the Holy Spirit; and that you may faithfully discharge your duties and responsibilities as pastor of this church?

Answer: I do.

The chairman shall then address the congregation:

Do you, the people of this congregation, continue to profess your willingness to receive _____ whom you have called to be your pastor; receiving the Word of God from his/her lips with humility and love; encouraging him/her in his/her labor; ministering to him/her of your substance; assisting his/her endeavors for your instruction and spiritual edification; supporting him/her with your prayers; that so by your mutual faith, the Kingdom of God may be advanced in this church. If so, will you all signify by standing.

Installation of a Pastor

The minister to be installed shall then kneel, and while the members of the Installation Committee lay their hands on him/her according to Apostolic example, one of them shall pray over him/her, solemnly installing him/her as pastor of the church.

Then with the minister still kneeling, the chairman of the Installation Committee shall say:

“ I now pronounce and declare that _____ has been regularly elected, set apart, and installed as pastor of this church, agreeably to the Word of God, and according to the constitution and by-laws of this church, and that as such he/she is entitled to our encouragement, honor, and support in the Lord.”

Then the chairman of the committee, taking the minister's Bible in his/her left hand, and the minister's right hand in his right hand shall return his/her Bible.

“ _____, we charge you therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word; be ready in season, and out of season; convince, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of a pastor, fulfill your ministry. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you. Amen.”

Installation of a Pastor

Then the minister will rise to his feet and the chairman shall extend to him the right hand of fellowship, saying:

_____, we welcome you as the pastor of our church, and give you the right hand of fellowship, and we pledge to you our support and prayers. God grant us that loving and being loved, serving and being served, blessing and being blessed, we may be prepared while we dwell together in this life for the perfect fellowship of the saints in the life which is to come.”

At this point an appropriate song may be sung while the other members of the Installation Committee, and the members of the congregation come forward to give the new pastor the right hand of fellowship.

Benediction

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.”

With proper alterations this ceremony may also be used for the installation of an assistant pastor, minister of youth, etc.

Installation of Church Officers

Installation of Church Officers (Elders, Deacons, Deaconesses)

“For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free - and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, ‘Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,’ is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling?

But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. And if they *were* all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I have no need of you;’ nor again the head to the feet, ‘I have no need of you.’ No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are

Installation of Church Officers

necessary. And those *members* of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unrepresentable *parts* have greater modesty, but our representable *parts* have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that *part* which lacks it that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another.

And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it*; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with *it*.

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. *Are* all apostles? *Are* all prophets? *Are* all teachers? *Are* all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.” (1 Co. 12:12-31)

“Now in those days, when *the number of* the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint

Installation of Church Officers

against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed they laid hands on them.

Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.” (Ac. 6::1-7)

“Likewise deacons *must be* reverent, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy for money, holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience. But let these also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons, being *found* blameless. Likewise *their wives must be* reverent, not slanderers,

Installation of Church Officers

temperate, faithful in all things. Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling *their* children and their own houses well. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.” (1 Ti. 3:8-13)

“The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. Likewise you younger people submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of *you* be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

*“God resists the proud,
“But gives grace to the humble.”*

Therefore, humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.” (1 Pe. 5:1-7)

Installation of Church Officers

The chairman shall then address those being installed;

Dearly beloved, you have heard in the Scriptures spoken here, how God has set certain ones in the church and has made them responsible for different services and ministries. We have good hope that you have considered the responsibilities of the offices to which you have been chosen and have rightly interpreted the call to serve these offices as that of the Great Head of the Church. And we pray that you may approve yourselves as worthy of this trust.

And now that this present company may understand your mind and hear your promise, and that this, your public profession of your faith and purpose, may move you to do your full duty, you shall answer clearly to all these things which we, in the name of the _____ Church require of you before your installation.

Do you acknowledge one God, who is revealed to us in Holy Scripture as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit?

Answer: I do.

Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being God’s divinely inspired revelation of man?

Installation of Church Officers

Answer: I do.

Do you subscribe to the doctrines of this church as stated in our Articles of Faith (Constitution, By-laws, or other), and will you submit to be governed by the Constitution and By-laws (Discipline, Articles or Incorporation, or other) of this church in the performance of your duties?

Answer: I do.

Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of your duties and responsibilities as an officer (Elder, Deacon, Deaconess, or other) of this church?

Answer: I do.

Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of your personal and private devotions, to keep yourself unspotted from the world, to live a life of purity of heart, and of daily prayer; that you may minister to others that which you first received yourself through fellowship with the Holy Spirit?

Answer: I do.

Installation of Church Officers

The chairman shall then address the congregation:

Do you, the people of this congregation, now profess your readiness to receive and to cooperate with these whom you have chosen; supporting them with your prayers, encouraging them in their labors; assisting them in their endeavors for your instruction and spiritual edification; that by your mutual faith the Kingdom of God may be advanced in this place?

If so, will you please signify by standing.

Then, with the newly chosen officers kneeling, the minister and other serving officers of the church, by prayer and the laying on of hands, shall solemnly set them apart to the offices for which they have been chosen. After this the minister shall say:

“I now pronounce and declare that _____ (naming each person) have been regularly elected, set apart, and installed in the offices for which they have been chosen, agreeably to the Word of God, and according to the Constitution and By-laws of this church and that as such they are entitled to all encouragement, honor, and support in the Lord. To this end we give you the right hand of fellowship to take part with us in this service.”

The minister and other serving officers shall then give each officer the right hand of fellowship, after which the congregation may sing an appropriate song.

Installation of Sunday School Officers

Installation of Sunday School Officers and Teachers

The installation may take place during a regular Sunday School session or during the Sunday morning service of the church. Those being installed shall stand before the congregation facing the minister, who shall address them in the following, or other appropriate, words.

Dearly beloved: You have been chosen to be the officers and Sunday School teachers of this Church. In this, one of the most important ministries of this church has been committed to you. You have been given the privilege and responsibility of guiding and inspiring boys and girls; men and women in the way of eternal life. In this you become co-laborers with Jesus Christ, the great Teacher, and belong in the noble succession of loyal and patient souls who have carried the light of the Gospel forward from one generation to another. By your words and by your example you will be constantly influencing those intrusted to your care in the deepest things of life: in the upreach of their spirits toward God, and the dedication of their lives to His service.

Installation of Sunday School Officers

I charge you, therefore, to be faithful, earnest, sympathetic, and persevering, keeping ever in mind that the great end of Christian education is not merely the imparting of information but the awakening and inspiring of the soul to live a Christian life. It should be your goal that as Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man, so your pupils may also grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth.

And now, that this church may understand your mind and hear your promises, and that this your public profession of faith and purpose may move you to do your full duty, you shall answer clearly to all these things which we require of you.

Do you acknowledge one God, who is revealed to us in Holy Scripture as God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit?

Answer: I do.

Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as being the divinely inspired and infallible Word of God; that in the original languages they are without error or contradiction; that they are historically correct and scientifically exact; and that

Installation of Sunday School Officers

they are man's only and final word of authority in faith and practice?

Answer: I do.

Do you promise that you will adhere strictly to the Word of God in your teaching and guiding the lives of those who have been trusted to your care?

Answer: I do.

Do you promise to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of your personal and private devotions and your study of the Word, to keep yourselves unspotted from the world, to live an exemplary life of purity of heart and of daily prayer; that you may minister to others that which you first received yourself through the fellowship of the Holy Spirit?

Answer: I do.

Do you believe in and subscribe to the doctrines of this church as stated in our Articles of Faith (Confession, Constitution, or other) and do you promise that your teaching will be in harmony with those doctrines?

Installation of Sunday School Officers

Answer: I do.

Do you promise to be diligent in study, regular and punctual in attendance at church and Sunday School; and maintain a sympathetic and friendly contact with your pupils, earnestly seeking by word and example to win them to Jesus Christ and develop them in faith and holiness of life?

Answer: I do.

The minister will then address the Sunday School or congregation

Members of our Sunday School (or congregation), you have heard the pledges of these your officers and teachers on your behalf. Do you now promise to show your appreciation of their efforts by being punctual and regular in attendance, attentive in interest, true to the principles and ideals of this church and Sunday School, and loyal to the Lord Jesus Christ whom we serve? If so will you answer, "I do."

Answer: I do.

Prayer of consecration in the minister's own words or the following:

Our Father, you have called into your service these

Installation of Sunday School Officers

who stand before this altar. We ask you to look favorably upon them as they now dedicate themselves to the work for which they have been chosen. Endue them with wisdom and insight that they may discern the eternal possibilities in the lives of those they teach. May they never waver in their efforts to win their pupils to Christ. Fill them with your Spirit, and help them realize that in all their efforts you are their Companion, their Leader, and their Friend. Give to these who teach and to those who are taught the spirit of understanding and obedience. May they increase in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

I now pronounce and declare that _____ (naming each person, or using the words “these who stand before this altar”) have been regularly chosen, set apart, and installed as the officers and Sunday School teachers of this church and as such they are entitled to all encouragement, honor, and support in the Lord. To this end we give you the right hand of fellowship to take part with us in this service.

After taking the hand of each person the minister shall pronounce the following benediction;

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to

Volunteer Appreciation

the power that works in us, to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever, Amen.”

Volunteer Appreciation

Volunteers serve in many different areas of church life and should be recognized for their work. The following service can be adapted for showing appreciation and for dedicating new volunteers.

Opening

Open your service in a way that fits your congregation. Provide appropriate songs, prayers and announcements.

Song Service

Choose hymns, choruses and Scripture songs that speak of service, helping others, or teaching.

Special Music

Choose a soloist, small group or choir to sing.

Sermon

Refer to one or more of the following Scripture passages in your message:

Volunteer Appreciation

- 1 Co. 12:1-27; Ph. 1:3-6; He. 12:23-24; He. 6:10.

Throughout the message, share stories of how volunteers have touched the lives of different people within the congregation.

Volunteer Recognition

Have the volunteers being recognized stand where they are or have them come to the front of the church. Say, “The people standing before you have volunteered to serve you in the ministry of this church. Today we are recognizing their service as we thank God for their faithfulness.”

WAYS TO AFFIRM AND THANK VOLUNTEERS

- Send a thank-you card with a personal note.
- Send a surprise gift certificate to one volunteer each month.
- Send homemade cookies or bread.
- Invite several volunteers and their families out to lunch or to your home for dinner.

Volunteer Appreciation

- Visit the homes of your volunteers periodically.
- Give your volunteers a day off periodically.
- Have children, youth and adults write thank-you notes to your volunteers; then read some of the notes to the congregation.
- Create a “volunteer board” using pictures of your volunteers ministering to others.
- Call your volunteers during the week to thank them for their faithfulness.
- Send them a letter of appreciation as they begin a new season of ministry.
- Take your volunteers to local or regional conferences.
- Give them copies of news articles or publications that feature the ministry they are involved in.

The Law Concerning Marriage: Important Points

A minister of the Gospel, before solemnizing any marriage, should acquaint himself/herself with the laws of the state in which the marriage is to be performed. Some states require a minister to be registered and have a license, the number of which must be recorded on every marriage certificate issued by him/her. Most states require a license issued to each couple. The laws covering the issuance of this license vary in the different states.

Some states permit licensed ministers to solemnize marriages. Other states require the minister to be fully ordained. The Evangelical Church Alliance authorizes only its fully ordained members to perform a marriage ceremony. The minister must inform himself with regard to the laws on marriage in the state of which he is a resident, or where he expects to officiate.

If a minister performs a marriage without legal authority, the marriage is valid, but the minister may be subject to fine or imprisonment.

A minister must perform a marriage ceremony within the legal requirements of local and state statutes, and according to the Scripture as interpreted by the International Board of Directors of the Evangelical Church Alliance.

Great care should be taken of all records of marriages. The minister should keep a record of his own; a record should be furnished to the authority issuing the license; and a certificate should be given to the bride and groom.

Marriage and Sexuality

The Evangelical Church Alliance believes God's Word sets forth the design for the happiness, well being, protection and stability in the life of every person, and that sexual relations be reserved for marriage and that the covenant of marriage be sanctioned only for a man and a woman, according to the standards of Biblical scriptures, including Genesis 2:24; Hebrews 13:4; Exodus 20:14; Romans 1:24; and 1 Timothy 1:8-10, as interpreted by the International Board of the Evangelical Church Alliance.

Premarital Counseling

Many couples decide to marry for wrong reasons. Therefore, the Evangelical Church Alliance endorses and encourages premarital counseling.

Often couples marry for outward attractions, sexual desires, rather than having Biblical Agape love for each other, and a desire to please God and be obedient to Him. At times, couples desire marriage to escape a disruptive home environment.

For others there is a lack of maturity, unrealistic expectations, rebellion, social pressure, pregnancy, and a host of other reasons that have the potential for serious conflict after the honeymoon.

The Bible speaks clearly regarding a marriage that will build a strong Biblical relationship and thereby glorify God.

When offering premarital counseling encourage the couple to look into Scripture for the Biblical view of marriage. Refer to Genesis 2:24-25, and Ephesians 5:21-33. Stress the role of the husband as head of the home, as Christ is the Head of the Church.

Show God's plan for the wife in marriage, Genesis 2:18. When these Scriptures are applied to marriage and the couple, daily, asks God, by His Spirit, to help them honor Him, God promises to honor that marriage.

Stress the need for Commitment, Understanding, Patience, Intimacy, Loving Communication and Obedience to God.

Explore their plans regarding the following issues: how to deal with finances, children, adapting to change, being accountable to each other, how to spend time with each others family especially during the holiday season. Some great Scripture passages to use regarding these areas are: Galatians 5:19-22; Song of Solomon 8:6,7; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Proverbs 5:15-20; 1 Corinthians 13; Colossians 3:16; 1 Peter 3:1-9;

1 Timothy 3:1-7; Proverbs 31:10-31; Hebrews 13:4; and Ephesians 4:26.

Encourage couples to take personality profiles so that they can better understand themselves, their strengths and weaknesses and how to adapt rather than trying to change each other. (The Evangelical

The Wedding

Church Alliance can direct you to materials you can use to accomplish these goals.)

Procession, Grouping at Altar, Recession

A church wedding should always be very thoroughly rehearsed, the minister making sure that each one understands just what to do at every stage in the ceremony.

We reproduce here a diagram which may be consulted in arranging the procession, grouping and recession in connection with a church wedding. It is flexible and can easily be adapted to the needs of a smaller or larger bridal party.

PROCESSION

Bride's Father
Bride
Maid of Honor
Flower Girl
Ring Bearer

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Bridesmaid
Bridesmaid

Toward the Altar

GROUPING AT THE ALTAR

11

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Altar

12

The numbers above are for the following individuals:

- | | |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 1. Usher | 7. Maid of Honor |
| 2. Usher | 8. Flower Girl |
| 3. Ring Bearer | 9. Bridesmaid |
| 4. Best Man | 10. Bridesmaid |
| 5. Groom | 11. Bride's Father |
| 6. Bride | 12. Minister |

If the design of the church permits, the minister, the groom, the best man and the ushers enter from the

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right side of the chancel at the beginning of the procession. As the bride and maid of honor approach the chancel the groom and best man move to meet them directly in front of the minister, the groom and best man on the minister's left hand, and the bride and her maid of honor on the minister's right hand.

After the bride's father has given her hand to the minister, he takes his seat in the section reserved for the bride's parents, which is on the left side of the center aisle, the section reserved for the groom's parents being on the right side.

RECESSION

Toward the Foyer

Groom - Bride
Best Man - Maid of Honor
Ring Bearer - Flower Girl
Groomsman - Bridesmaid
Groomsman - Bridesmaid
Bride's Father - Bride's Mother
Groom's Father - Groom's Mother
Minister - Minister's Wife

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Wedding Ceremony

The Marriage service of _____ and
_____ on _____.

Processional - Bride enters, all stand.

Let us pray: O God of love, creator of man and woman bless these sacred moments together. You have ordained marriage as a means of joining Your two separate creations as one and only in Your presence is such a union complete. Be with us now, we pray, in Jesus name Amen. (Or you may say your own prayer)

Seat Congregation.

We are gathered together in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, to join together this man and this woman in holy matrimony.

It is a solemnly unique and treasured moment in life, when two people who were once strangers to one another are drawn together by an irresistible attraction, so that their souls desire no longer to be divided by time or space. When a man sees in woman

The Wedding

his dreams of helpmate, comforter, and lover, and when a woman finds in a man the security, companionship, and lover her heart has been longing for, God has ordained marriage.

Who gives this woman to be the bride of this man?

Answer: **Her mother and I.** (Or you may use the following)

The Celebration of Marriage: Do you _____ and _____ agree that your daughter _____, should now be united in marriage with _____?

Answer: We do.

Do you _____ and _____ agree that your son, _____, should now be united in marriage with _____?

Answer: We do.

In light of these words signifying the blessing of your respective families, I ask you, _____ and _____, to participate in the celebration for marriage by the exchanging and the giving of rings.

The Wedding

Song: (Optional)

Love is the greatest thing on the earth, and the rite of marriage is the first and oldest rite in the world. It was instituted by God in the beginning, adorned and beautified by Christ in Cana of Galilee, and commended by Paul to be honorable among all men. It is a sacred and holy estate in which we may not only find happiness and contentment but enter into the deepest mystery of experience and the very sacrament of divine love. Those who take the vows of marriage are brought into the closest and most sacred of human relationships. Their lives are blended into one as the waters of confluent streams are mingled, and then share the joys and sorrows of life.

It is the duty of both to cherish a mutual esteem in love; to bear with each other's infirmities and weaknesses; and encourage each other in the things of God.

Name of Groom _____, in your life, your character and conduct lies **Name of Brides** _____'s happiness. She has given you the most sacred treasure under heaven — her life and love. The continuance of those virtues, as a

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husband will insure her, bless and keep her heart fast knit to yours.

Will you vow here, as you have already promised her, that you will be true and loyal, be patient with her in sickness, comfort her in sorrow, love and honor her, in all duty and tenderness to live with her and cherish her according to the ordinance of God in the sacred bond of marriage? If so, answer I will.

Answer: I will.

Name of Bride _____ in your life and love lie **Name of Groom** _____'s health and inspiration. He will look to you for cheer, for encouragement and for confidence. May your life be the inspiration and your love the protection he will need.

Answer: I will.

Will you vow here, as you have already promised him, that you will be patient in adversity, minister to him in affliction, comfort him in sorrow, love and honor him, according to the ordinance of God in the sacred bond of marriage? If so, answer I will.

Answer: I will.

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Vows: You may now join hands and declare before God and these witnesses, and to each other your solemn marriage covenant. (Couple joins hands, faces each other and repeats)

Groom repeats: I take you, _____ to be my faithful and loving wife. Throughout the remainder of our life together we will be held in union loving, honoring, and providing for each others needs. And I promise to remain faithful to you, to love and care for you, as long as we both shall live.

Bride repeats: I take you, _____ to be my faithful and loving husband. Throughout the remainder of our life together we will be held in union loving, honoring, and providing for each others needs. And I promise to remain faithful to you, to love and care for you, as long as we both shall live.

Have you a token of your love to and for each other that will seal the vows you have made to each other today?

The unbroken circle, the emblem of eternity, and the gold, the emblem of that which is least tarnished and most enduring, are to show how lasting and imperishable is the faith and love you both promise by

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the giving and receiving of these rings. With these emblems of purity and endless devotion, you are sealing your marriage vows forever.

The unbroken circle, the emblem of eternity, and the gold, the emblem of that which is least tarnished and most enduring, are to show how lasting and imperishable is the faith and love you both promise by the giving and receiving of these rings. With these emblems of purity and endless devotion, you are sealing your marriage vows forever.

Groom repeats: This ring I give to you _____ in token of our marriage vows. May it ever be a symbol of the unbroken bond of our love.

Bride repeats: I accept this ring from you, _____, **Groom** _____ and I wear it as a sign of my love for you.

Bride repeats: This ring I give you, _____ in token of our marriage vows. May it ever be a symbol of the unbroken bond of our love.

Groom repeats: I accept this ring from you, _____, **Bride** and I wear it as a sign of my love for you.

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For as much as you, _____ and you, _____ have openly declared your desire to be united in holy matrimony, and have pledged your love and faith each to the other before God and these witnesses, I declare you to be husband and wife in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

As the first act of your married life, Let us Pray.
Couple kneel: Prayer by the minister

Prayer: (Extemporaneous prayer closing with the Lord's prayer in unison)

Song: May be optional but recommended

Lighting of the Unity Candle: Symbolic of two lives becoming one. "It is not good that the man should be alone... Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother, and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh." (Ge. 2:18,24)

As two lights are now blended into one, so two lives are blended into one. May you be one in name, one in aim, one in the Lord, and one in happy destiny together.

The Wedding

Communion: For the bride and groom. (Optional)

Presentation of Roses to Parents:
_____ and _____ ask you
_____ and _____ to take these
roses in token of their gratitude and their love and
know that they too rejoice in their new adult relationship
with you. **Presents the roses to parents.**

Benediction: The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious
unto you. The Lord lift up His countenance
upon you and give you peace.

Remove veil: (Groom may kiss the bride)

Congratulation and Presentation: Minister congratulates
the couple and then says:

And now it is my pleasure to present to you, Mr.
and Mrs. _____.

Recessional:

The Wedding

Wedding Anniversary Service

The following Silver Wedding Service may be used for a Golden
Wedding Anniversary by substituting the correct words.

Silver or Golden Wedding Anniversary Service

Dearly Beloved, we are assembled here to celebrate
the happy completion by our friends _____
and _____ of _____
years of life together in the bonds of marriage. We
take pride and joy in a couple, who through an
extended period of years, have been faithful to the
vows made at the marriage altar. We are happy for
the occasion which enables us to extend our congratulations
to our friends _____ and
_____, on this _____ anniversary of
their wedding day, and with one accord we give thanks
to Almighty God, and say:

We thank you Heavenly Father, that you have
kept, blessed and protected this couple through the
days of the years of their pilgrimage together. We
ask that you continue to go with them and be their
Guide, and the ever-present Guardian of their home

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and family circle. Mindful of your goodness, we do now rejoice before you, who are the Giver of every good and perfect gift, and the Source of our happiness, God over all and blessed forever. Amen.

Then the minister, addressing the anniversary couple, shall say:

_____ and _____, _____ years ago, trusting in the help of God, you took upon yourselves a most holy and sacred covenant to love, comfort, honor and keep each other in sickness and in health, and, forsaking all others, to keep only unto each other, so long as you both shall live. In the fulfillment of this holy covenant you have lived to this hour. Do you here and now, in the light of your experience during the years that have elapsed since that hour, renew that covenant before this assembly of your friends, and profess your abiding faith in the facts and values represented in the joint institution of Christian Marriage and the Christian Home?

Answer: We do, in the sight of God and these witnesses.

The minister shall then say:

This ring, the sign and seal of the marriage

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covenant, was given _____ years ago as the pledge of the union of two hearts and lives. Again, we give to you this ring, with a holy benediction:

Grant, O Heavenly Father, to bless this ring, given so long ago as the sacred pledge of a holy covenant, and so continue to assist Your servants, that he who now returns it and she who now again receives it, may abide in Your peace and journey onward in Your favor, to their life's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O God, Who has so consecrated the state of marriage that in it is signified and represented the spiritual marriage and unity between Christ and His Church; look with mercy on these Your servants, _____ and _____, that they may continue to love, honor, and cherish each other, and so to live together in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may ever be a haven of blessing and of peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, world without end.

Amen.

Then shall the minister pronounce the benediction:

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“The Lord bless you and keep you; The Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; The Lord lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.”

**Renewing Marriage
Vows and Committing
the Union to Christ**

The ceremony may follow the procession and grouping at the altar as presented in the wedding ceremony or it may be altered for the occasion.

The couple will face the minister at the altar.

Prayer:

Minister: We are gathered together today, in the sight of God and in the presence of this congregation to renew the vows of _____ and _____ and to commit their union to the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is right that Christians commit their marriage union to Jesus Christ for He is our Creator and the One who makes two become one flesh.

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Let us pray: Father, we hold _____ and _____ up to You that in renewing their vows and committing their union to Your Son, they may continue in a true Biblical relationship with each other for as long as they live. We thank You for their determination to serve You and to make Your precious Son the center of their union. Amen.

Groom: _____ do you now renew the vows you made to _____ years ago? Do you promise to keep your marriage centered on Jesus Christ and do you promise to continue to love her, comfort her, honor and keep her, in sickness and in health; forsaking all others, keeping yourself only unto her, so long as you both shall live?

Answer: I do.

Bride: _____ do you now renew the vows you made to _____ years ago?

Do you promise to keep your marriage centered on Jesus Christ and do you promise to continue to love him, comfort him, honor and keep him, in sickness and in health; forsaking all others, keeping yourself only unto him, so long as you both shall live?

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Answer: I do.

Song:

Groom: _____ please take _____'s hand in yours and repeat after me.

I _____ rededicate myself to you _____ as my wife, and I pledge to keep our union centered on our Lord Jesus Christ. And thereto I pledge to you my fidelity.

Bride: _____ please repeat after me.

I _____ rededicate myself to you _____ as my husband, and I pledge to keep our union centered on our Lord Jesus Christ. And thereto I pledge to you my fidelity.

Ministers remarks:

Prayer:

Communion: (For the couple only) (Optional)

The Wedding

Now, having heard you renew your vows and dedicate your marriage to the Lord Jesus Christ I pronounce God's riches blessings upon you and your union.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Bride and Groom turn to face the Congregation:

I now present to you Mr. and Mrs. _____, two who are one in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now, may the love of God, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you forever. Amen.

Recessional:

Admission to Church Membership

**Admission to
Church Membership**

“What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I will take up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I will pay my vows to the Lord now in the presence of all His people.”

“Therefore, whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.”

The minister addresses those being received into membership:

Dearly beloved, you are called of God to be His children through Jesus Christ. We give thanks to Him who has opened your hearts to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord, and has inclined you to present yourselves here to enter into the communion and fellowship of this church.

Is it your desire to unite with this church submitting to its government and discipline, cooperating with

Admission to Church Membership

all its good endeavors and promoting with all your power its purity, peace, and prosperity?

Answer: I so desire.

Do you promise, with the help of the Lord, that you will be faithful in all your Christian duties, that you will attend the services of the church whenever possible, that you will support it with your prayers and offerings, and do whatever you can to promote its growth and spiritual life?

Answer: I do.

Do you believe the Holy Bible consisting of both the Old and New Testaments is the inspired Word of God?

Answer: I do.

Do you believe in the God of the Bible who is revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

Answer: I do.

Do you believe in the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, in His atoning death and resurrection, and in His

Admission to Church Membership

second coming to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords?

Answer: I do.

Do you believe that Jesus died on the cross as your substitute and sacrifice for sin, and that through His death you now have forgiveness of sins, and do you now confess Him as your Lord and Savior?

Answer: I do.

The minister addresses the congregation:

Members of the church, you have heard the confession of faith that these before you have given, and you have heard them express their desire to become members of the church; and their pledge of loyalty and faithfulness in fulfilling their Christian duties; will you now receive them as members of your communion and fellowship? If you will, please all answer: "We do."

Answer: We do.

The minister may then address the new members:

I then, as pastor of this church, welcome you with

Dedication of Parents with Infants

joy into our communion and fellowship.

And as members of one body we pledge to you our help and our prayers, that you may evermore increase in knowledge and love of God.

God grant that in loving and being loved, in serving and being served, in blessing and being blessed, we may be prepared in this life for the perfect fellowship of the saints in the life which is to come.

Song: Any appropriate song.

Benediction: "Now to Him that is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we can ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

Dedication of Parents with Infants

Because most children dedicated are not old enough to make their own commitments it is the parents who are dedicating themselves to: "Train up a

Dedication of Parents with Infants

child in the way he should go.” (Pr. 22:6)

Dedication is the act of devoting oneself to the service or worship of a divine being. Since an infant would not be capable of making such a decision, it is left to the parents to dedicate themselves to bring up their children “...in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Ep. 6:4)

There are two places that a child should receive Christian training. In the home of the parents, and in a local church. Parents should understand that their example is an important part of training a child. They should associate with a church that is evangelical and emphasizes the Word of God.

The congregation should understand that in addition to witnessing this dedication they are committing themselves to extend their Christian influence to this child also.

Let us begin this dedication with Scripture:

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way,

Dedication of Parents with Infants

when you lie down, and when you rise up.” (De. 6:6,7)

“Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it. (Pr. 22:6)

Dearly beloved, the Scriptures bear witness to the fact that in ancient times parents dedicated their children to the Lord and His service. Hannah brought her child, Samuel, and dedicated him to God and to the service of His house. Mary, the mother of our Lord, brought the child Jesus, according to the law of Moses, to the temple to present Him to the Lord; and the Savior has said, “Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.” The Apostle Peter declared, “The promise is for you and your children;” therefore this child has been brought here that he/she may be consecrated to the service of his/her Creator, and that he/she may receive the blessings of the covenant of grace into which God is mercifully pleased to enter with all His children.

Do you, in the presence of God, and of these witnesses, solemnly dedicate this child to the Lord.

Answer: I/We do.

Dedication of Parents with Infants

Do you, in the presence of God, and of these witnesses, solemnly dedicate yourselves to live your lives in Christian conduct, to train this child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and faithfully attend the services of the church with him/her?

Answer: I/we do.

Congregation, do you solemnly dedicate yourselves to live a Christian life before this child in the days and years to come? Will you offer yourselves to assist in supporting the Christian education of the child as far as you are able to do?

Answer: I/We do.

The minister shall then take the child and say:

I now present _____ to God, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Parents to repeat: I/We dedicate ourselves to bringing _____ to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and living before God and men in such a manner that he/she will see that our faith is genuine and be inspired to seek and serve the Living God.

Water Baptism

I now return this child, whom you have presented to the Lord, to your care and keeping. I charge you to remember the vows you have made concerning this child today. Give all diligence to train up this child in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Prayer: The closing prayer should include a request for the Lord's blessings on the child and God's continual guidance all the days of his/her life.

“Now the God of peace, that brought up our Lord Jesus, from the dead, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.”

Water Baptism

“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
(Ac. 2:38)

“In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, and saying, ‘Repent, for

Water Baptism

the kingdom of heaven is at hand!’ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare the way of the Lord; Make His paths straight.’ Now John himself was clothed in camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. ... Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. And John *tried* to prevent Him, saying, ‘I have need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?’ But Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Permit *it to be so* now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.’ Then he allowed Him. When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. And suddenly a voice *came* from heaven saying, ‘This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’” (Mt. 3:1-6;13-17)

Dearly Beloved, since all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, and have nothing in themselves by which they can be delivered for the guilt and pollution of sin, and attain to that holiness

Water Baptism

without which no man can see the Lord, we invite you to join with us in fervent prayer for these persons, that they may have grace always to keep their covenant with God, and that they may continually enjoy the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray. Almighty and immortal God, we call upon You for these persons; that in submitting to baptism, they may by this ordinance testify to that inner washing through faith in the precious blood of Your Son Jesus Christ, and that they may enjoy the everlasting benediction of this heavenly washing and come to the eternal kingdom which You have promised by Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hear the word of the Savior as recorded by Matthew, in the 28th chapter, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Mt. 28:19)

The minister shall then address the candidates for baptism:

Beloved, you have heard how the congregation has prayed that God would continue His living favor toward you and bring you into His eternal kingdom.

Water Baptism

And God, the covenant keeping God, has promised by His only begotten Son, whom He yielded up for our redemption, that He would grant these gracious gifts.

Now, you must promise on your part, in the presence of this congregation, that you, renouncing Satan and all his works, will hold fast to God's Holy Word and obediently keep his commandments.

Do you renounce Satan and all his works, the vain pomp of the world, with all its lustful desires and the carnal desires of the flesh, so that you will not follow nor be led by them?

Answer: I renounce them all.

Do you believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth? And in Jesus Christ His only begotten Son, our Lord? That He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, that He was crucified, dead and buried? That He arose again the third day? That He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God? And from there shall come again to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords?

Water Baptism

Answer: All this I steadfastly believe.

Do you believe that through His death on the cross we have forgiveness of sin and that His blood cleanses us from all unrighteousness? And do you now, before these witnesses, confess Him as your Lord and Savior?

Answer: I confess Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior.

Do you believe the Bible, consisting of the Old and New Testaments, to be the divinely inspired Word of God? And will you, God being your helper, govern your life according to its teaching?

Answer: I will, God being my helper.

Almighty God, our Father, grant that the regenerating grace which You have so mercifully bestowed to these persons may not have been given in vain. Grant that they may enjoy that greater baptism of the Holy Spirit to the end that all sinful affections may be destroyed in them and that every Christian grace and virtue may freely live and grow in them. Grant that they may have constant victory over sin and that they may ever enjoy the fullness of Your grace for

Water Baptism

ever remaining in the number of Your faithful and elect children. We ask in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

As the minister baptizes each person he shall say:

_____, In obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, and upon your public confession of Him as your Savior and Lord, I now baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

When all candidates have been baptized, the service may be closed with the following benediction:

“Now to Him who is *able* to keep you from stumbling, And to present *you* faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, Who alone is wise, *Be* glory and majesty, dominion and power, Both now and forever. Amen.” (Jude 24-25)

Breaking Ground for a Church Building

Breaking Ground for a Church Building

The people being assembled where the church building is to be erected, will stand while the minister says:

“The heaven, *even* the heavens, *are* the Lord’s; But the earth He has given to the children of men.” (Ps. 115:16)

“*Is* not the Lord your God with you? And has He *not* given you rest on every side? For He has given the inhabitants of the land into my hand, and the land is subdued before the Lord and before His people.” (1 Chr. 22:18)

Then the following prayer may be offered.

Almighty God, our Father: The earth is Yours and all its fullness. You have made it fruitful and filled it with beauty; and have taught us to occupy the earth and subdue it, and to pray that Your Kingdom may come. Consecrate this spot of ground which we set apart in the midst of your vineyard. Accept the sacrificial act by which we break this sod. Sow here the good seed of the Kingdom and bring forth in

Breaking Ground for a Church Building

this place the rich fruit of an abundant spiritual harvest to the honor of Your great and holy name. Amen.

Then the minister will read either one or both of the following Scripture passages:

“Now Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Haran. So he came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. And he took one of the stones of that place and put it at his head, and he lay down in that place to sleep. Then he dreamed, and behold, a ladder was set up on the earth, and its top reached to heaven; and there the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. And behold, the LORD stood above it and said: “I am the LORD God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie I will give to you and your descendants. “Also your descendants shall be as the dust of the earth; you shall spread abroad to the west and the east, to the north and the south; and in you and in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have spoken to you.” Then Jacob awoke from his sleep

Breaking Ground for a Church Building

and said, “Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it.” And he was afraid and said, “How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!” Then Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put at his head, set it up as a pillar, and poured oil on top of it. And he called the name of that place Bethel; but the name of that city had been Luz previously. Then Jacob made a vow, saying, “If God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I am going, and give me bread to eat and clothing to put on, “so that I come back to my father’s house in peace, then the LORD shall be my God. “And this stone which I have set as a pillar shall be God’s house, and of all that You give me I will surely give a tenth to You.” (Ge. 28:10-22)

“The earth is the LORD’S, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.

For He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the waters.

Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place?

He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and

Laying the Cornerstone

righteousness from the God of his salvation.

This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face. Selah

Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.

Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory. Selah” (Ps. 24)

The singing of an appropriate hymn or chorus may follow. The minister may present a message concerning the building to be erected. The minister will then take a shovel, and setting it in the earth offer a prayer before the lifting of the shovel or the removal of the sod. And then he or another so chosen, shall remove the first shovel full of earth with an appropriate verse of Scripture. The congregation shall then sing the Doxology, which is to be followed by the benediction.

Laying the Cornerstone

The people having assembled where the ground has been previously dedicated, and the stone has been made ready, the minister in charge shall read:

Laying the Cornerstone

“Unless the Lord builds the house, They labor in vain who build it;” (Ps. 127:1)

“Let Your work appear to Your servants, And Your glory to their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, And establish the work of our hands for us; Yes, establish the work of our hands.” (Ps. 90:16,17)

The minister may offer the following or another prayer:

Almighty God, we lay this cornerstone today for a building which is to stand as a beacon light of that Gospel made possible to us through the atoning work on Calvary’s cross of Jesus Christ, the greatest corner stone of all. Just as this stone is part of that foundation on which the structure is to rest, so the Gospel which is to be proclaimed here rests upon Jesus’ blood and righteousness. May everyone who preaches here be faithful to that sacred trust. Amen.

Then the congregation shall read the 122nd Psalm responsively.

Minister: “I was glad when they said to me, “Let us go into the house of the LORD.”

Congregation: “Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!”

Minister: “Jerusalem is built as a city that is compact together,”

Laying the Cornerstone

Congregation: “Where the tribes go up, the tribes of the LORD, to the Testimony of Israel, to give thanks to the name of the LORD.”

Minister: “For thrones are set there for judgment, the thrones of the house of David.”

Congregation: “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May they prosper who love you.”

Minister: “Peace be within your walls, prosperity within your palaces.”

Congregation: “For the sake of my brethren and companions, I will now say, “Peace be within you.”

Minister: “Because of the house of the LORD our God I will seek your good.”

An appropriate hymn or chorus may then be sung.

The box which is to be deposited within or beneath the stone shall be produced and a list of its contents read. The minister, or other person appointed, shall then take the trowel and use it before the stone is lowered into its place. When the stone has been lowered into position, the minister shall strike it three times and say:

Behold I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect and precious: He that believes in Me shall not be confounded. No other foundation can men lay except this which is Jesus Christ, and you are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus

Dedication of a Church

Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.

After prayer has been offered a suitable message may be given, The service may then be concluded by a suitable hymn followed by the benediction.

Dedication of a Church

The service having been opened by the singing of appropriate hymns and other exercises, the congregation shall rise, and the following 24th Psalm shall be read responsively.

Minister: “The earth is the LORD’S, and all its fullness, the world and those who dwell therein.”

Congregation: “For He has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the waters.”

Minister: “Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place?”

Congregation: “He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, nor sworn deceitfully.”

Minister: “He shall receive blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.”

Congregation: “This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, who seek Your face.”

Minister: “Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.”

Dedication of a Church

Congregation: “Who is this King of glory?”

Minister: “The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.”

Congregation: “Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in.”

Minister: “Who is this King of glory?”

Congregation: “The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory.”

Minister: “Glory be the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit;”

Congregation: “As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be world without end. Amen.”

Then the following prayer may be offered:

Almighty God, Who dwells not in temples made with hands; and Whose shrine is in the souls of those who worship You in spirit and in truth; grant that what we dedicate will not merely be these perishable walls, but that we might consecrate our lives anew. Let Your glory fill this church and the temple of our lives. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

An appropriate hymn or chorus may be sung. After the song the following Scripture Lesson may be read.

Then Solomon spoke: “The LORD said He would

Dedication of a Church

dwell in the dark cloud. I have surely built You an exalted house, and a place for You to dwell in forever.”

Then the king turned around and blessed the whole assembly of Israel, while all the assembly of Israel was standing. And he said: “Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, who has fulfilled with His hands what He spoke with His mouth to my father David, saying, ‘Since the day that I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel in which to build a house, that My name might be there, nor did I choose any man to be a ruler over My people Israel. ‘Yet I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there; and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.’

“Now it was in the heart of my father David to build a temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. “But the LORD said to my father David, ‘Whereas it was in your heart to build a temple for My name, you did well in that it was in your heart.

‘Nevertheless you shall not build the temple, but your son who will come from your body, he shall build the temple for My name.’

“So the LORD has fulfilled His word which He spoke, and I have filled the position of my father David, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised;

Dedication of a Church

and I have built the temple for the name of the LORD God of Israel. “And there I have put the ark, in which is the covenant of the LORD which He made with the children of Israel.”

Then SOLOMON stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands (for Solomon had made a bronze platform five cubits long, five cubits wide, and three cubits high, and had set it in the midst of the court; and he stood on it, knelt down on his knees before all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven); and he said: “LORD God of Israel, there is no God in heaven or on earth like You, who keep Your covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts.

“You have kept what You promised Your servant David my father; You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled it with Your hand, as it is this day.

“Therefore, LORD God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David my father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, only if your sons take heed to their way, that they walk in My law as you have walked before Me.’

“And now, O LORD God of Israel, let Your word

Dedication of a Church

come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David.

“But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built! “Yet regard the prayer of Your servant and his supplication, O LORD my God, and listen to the cry and the prayer which Your servant is praying before You: “that Your eyes may be open toward this temple day and night, toward the place where You said You would put Your name, that You may hear the prayer which Your servant prays toward this place.

“And may You hear the supplications of Your servant and of Your people Israel, when they pray toward this place. Hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and when You hear, forgive.

“If anyone sins against his neighbor, and is forced to take an oath, and comes and takes an oath before Your altar in this temple, “then hear from heaven, and act, and judge Your servants, bringing retribution on the wicked by bringing his way on his own head, and justifying the righteous by giving him according to his righteousness.

“Or if Your people Israel are defeated before an enemy because they have sinned against You, and return and confess Your name, and pray and make supplication before You in this temple, “then hear

Dedication of a Church

from heaven and forgive the sin of Your people Israel, and bring them back to the land which You gave to them and their fathers.

“When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because they have sinned against You, when they pray toward this place and confess Your name, and turn from their sin because You afflict them, “then hear in heaven, and forgive the sin of Your servants, Your people Israel, that You may teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain on Your land which You have given to Your people as an inheritance.

“When there is famine in the land, pestilence or blight or mildew, locusts or grasshoppers; when their enemies besiege them in the land of their cities; whatever plague or whatever sickness there is; “whatever prayer, whatever supplication is made by anyone, or by all Your people Israel, when each one knows his own burden and his own grief, and spreads out his hands to this temple: “then hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and forgive, and give to everyone according to all his ways, whose heart You know (for You alone know the hearts of the sons of men), “that they may fear You, to walk in Your ways as long as they live in the land which You gave to our fathers.

“Moreover, concerning a foreigner, who is not of Your people Israel, but who comes from a far

Dedication of a Church

country for the sake of Your great name and Your mighty hand and Your outstretched arm, when they come and pray in this temple; then hear from heaven Your dwelling place, and do according to all for which the foreigner calls to You, that all peoples of the earth may know Your name and fear You, as do Your people Israel, and that they may know that this temple which I have built is called by Your name.

“When Your people go out to battle against their enemies, wherever You send them, and when they pray to You toward this city which You have chosen and the temple which I have built for Your name, “then hear from heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause.

“When they sin against You (for there is no one who does not sin), and You become angry with them and deliver them to the enemy, and they take them captive to a land far or near; “yet when they come to themselves in the land where they were carried captive, and repent, and make supplication to You in the land of their captivity, saying, ‘We have sinned, we have done wrong, and have committed wickedness’; “and when they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their captivity, where they have been carried captive, and pray toward their land which You gave to their fathers, the city which You have chosen, and toward the temple which I have

Dedication of a Church

built for Your name: “then hear from heaven Your dwelling place their prayer and their supplications, and maintain their cause, and forgive Your people who have sinned against You.

“Now, my God, I pray, let Your eyes be open and let Your ears be attentive to the prayer made in this place.

“Now therefore, arise, O LORD God, to Your resting place, you and the ark of Your strength. Let Your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let Your saints rejoice in goodness.

“O LORD God, do not turn away the face of Your Anointed; remember the mercies of Your servant David.” (2 Chr. 6)

In the case of a rebuilt or enlarged church, use Haggai 2. Then follow with a appropriate message if desired.

The people stand while the minister and congregation read the following responsive reading.

Minister: Surely the Lord is in this place.

Congregation: This is none other but the house of God.

Minister: “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life.”

Congregation: “And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.”

Dedication of a Church

Minister: “But who *am* I, and who *are* my people, That we should be able to offer so willingly as this?”

Congregation: “Oh Lord our God, all this abundance that we have prepared to build You a house for Your holy name is from Your hand, and *is* all Your own.”

Minister: “The Lord said He would dwell in the dark cloud. I have surely built You an exalted house, And a place for You to dwell in forever.”

Congregation: “But will God indeed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built!”

Minister: Then said the Lord, “I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice.”

Congregation: “For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.”

Minister: “Now, O my God, I pray that your eyes will be open and your ears be attentive to the prayers made in this place.”

Congregation: “Now therefore, Arise, O Lord God, to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your strength. Let your priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, And let Your saints rejoice in goodness.”

Dedication of a Church

Minister: To the glory of God our Father, by whose favor we have built this house, to the honor of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, our Lord and Savior; to the praise of the Holy Spirit, source of life and love and light;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Minister: For worship in prayer and song; for the ministry of the Word; for the celebration of the ordinances our Savior instituted.

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Minister: For comfort to those who mourn; for strength to those who are tempted; for help to live right;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Minister: To the memory of our beloved dead, to those who have remained true, to all who have unloosed the bonds of ignorance and evil.

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Minister: To the ministry of the strong to the weak; to the bringing of light in darkness; to the giving of hope, courage, and spiritual health to all human hearts;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Minister: To the proclamation of the Gospel that sets men free; to the liberty of the sons of God;

Congregation: We dedicate this house

Dedication of a Church

Minister: For the sanctification of the family; for the guidance of children; for the salvation of the lost.

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Minister: As a tribute of gratitude and love, a free will offering of thanksgiving and praise, from those who have tasted the cup of your salvation, and experienced the riches of your grace.

Congregation: We, the people of this church and congregation, now consecrating ourselves anew, dedicate this entire building in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Choir: (Sings) Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen

The minister shall offer a prayer of dedication.

The service may be closed with an appropriate congregational hymn followed by the benediction.

Dedication of Musical Instruments or Hymnals

With slight changes, this may be used for dedication of other church items.

Minister: “It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord.”

Congregation: “And to sing praises unto Your name, O Most high God.”

Minister: “To show forth Your loving kindness early in the morning.”

Congregation: “And Your faithfulness every night.”

Minister: “Upon an instrument of ten strings.”

Congregation: “And upon the psaltery and the harp.”

Minister: “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you in all richness; teaching one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord.”

Congregation: “Let the people praise You, O God; let all the people praise You.”

Minister: “The singers went before; the players on instruments followed.”

Congregation: “As were the singers the players

on instruments shall be in Zion. All my springs are in You.”

Minister: “And David and all the house of Israel played before the Lord, on all manner of instruments, even on harps and on psalteries and timbrels and cornets and cymbals.”

Congregation: “And they brought the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet, and with the sound of the musical instruments of God.”

Minister: “Take up the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ.”

Congregation: “Praise Him with the sound of the trumpet, praise Him with stringed instruments and organs.”

Minister: “O sing unto the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things.”

Congregation: “And they sang a new song; and every created thing which is in the heaven and on the earth and on the sea and all things that are in them I heard singing; and I heard the voice of a great multitude and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders saying, Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigns.”

Minister: To the glory of Almighty God, Author of peace and of concord.

Congregation: We dedicate this (Instrument, or hymnals or other).

Dedication of Musical Instruments or Hymnals

Minister: To the honor of the Lord Jesus Christ at whose birth the angels sang.

Congregation: We dedicate this (Instrument or hymnals or other)

Minister: To the gracious intercession of the Holy Spirit, in whose fellowship the discords of human life are resolved in perfect harmony of God and man.

Congregation: We dedicate this (Instrument, or hymnals or other).

The minister and congregation will then say in unison:

Praise waits for You O God in Zion and unto You shall the vow be performed. Graciously accept the work of our hands, the worship of our lips, and the melody of our hearts. Unite our souls and our voices in singing Your praise. Tune our lips and our songs to the anthems and activities of heaven. Cheer and inspire us with sweet echoes of celestial music as we move forward on the march of life, and cause all the strains of our earthly praise to find their harmony in that great chorus of the multitude whom no man can number singing about the throne of God.

For the comfort of the sorrowing; for the strengthening of the faint, for the cheering of those upon whom the burdens of life rest heavily; for the stirring of the

The Lord's Supper

souls of men to high resolves and noble deeds; for the swelling of the chorus of praise; for the songs of choir and congregation, we, the people of this church dedicate ourselves and this (Musical instrument, hymnals or other) to the worship of Almighty God and the service of our fellow man, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Doxology may be sung here.

The Lord's Supper

On the day appointed for the Lord's Supper, it would be well to have the elements and other details of the ordinance prepared prior to the time of service. A dependable person should be appointed to see that the bread is placed in the trays and that the cups are filled. The table should be covered with a white linen cloth, and the bread and cups covered with another one. After those who are to serve the elements have taken their position, the minister shall give the following invitation:

You who have truly and earnestly repented of your sins, and are at peace with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking in His Holy way, draw near with reverence, faith and thanksgiving and take the Supper of the Lord.

It is the custom in evangelical congregations to serve communion to all believers, not limiting the Lord's Supper to local members.

The Lord's Supper

“Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.”

As we draw near let us gratefully recall the words of the Lord Jesus when He said:

“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. “I am the bread of life. “Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. “This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.” The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?” Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you.

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“Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. “For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.

“He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. “As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. “This is the bread which came down from heaven— not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.” (Jn. 6:47-58)

Then the minister shall take a piece of bread and breaking it, shall say:

“For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the *same* night in which He was betrayed took bread; and when He had given thanks, He broke *it* and said, ‘Take eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’”

Then the minister shall pass the trays containing the bread to the serving brethren, who shall stand until all have received the trays. While the bread is being distributed the congregation may sing an appropriate hymn or chorus. Having completed the distribution of the bread, the serving brethren upon returning shall stand before the table until the minister has taken the trays from their hands and returned them to the table. Then the minister will distribute the bread to the serving brethren. Note: the bread may be eaten by the individual immediately upon his/her

The Lord's Supper

taking it from the tray, or the congregation may be instructed that each member is to hold the element until all have been served and then, upon appropriate words from the minister, all partake together.

The minister shall offer his own or the following prayer:

O blessed Christ! You are the bread of life, and provide for all the needs of our bodies and our souls. Bless this bread that we may commune together with you in divine love and fellowship. Amen.

Then the minister shall say:

“Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

Then the minister shall take a cup from the tray, and lifting it up, shall say:

“In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.” For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.”

The minister may offer his own or the following prayer:

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Almighty God, our Father, who in Your great love for us sent our Lord Jesus Christ to redeem us with His own precious blood, bless the fruit of the vine, that we may commune together in the love and fellowship of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Then the minister shall pass the trays to the serving brethren, who shall stand until all have received the trays. While the cup is being distributed, the congregation may sing or the musicians may play an appropriate song.

Having completed the distribution of the wine, the serving brethren upon returning will stand before the table until the minister has taken the trays from their hands and returned them to the table. Then the minister will distribute the fruit of the vine to the serving brethren. Note: individuals may drink the wine immediately upon taking it or be instructed that each member is to retain his/her cup until all have been served and then, upon appropriate words from the minister, all partake of the cup together.

The minister shall then say:

“Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.’”

During the serving of the bread or the cup, the minister may quote appropriate scriptures or give words of exhortation.

The minister shall then say:

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“And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.”

An appropriate hymn or chorus may be sung at this point.

The minister will pronounce the Benediction.

“Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.”

The Funeral: Making Plans

Upon receiving word of the death of a person whose funeral he/she is to officiate, the minister should visit the bereaved as soon as possible, for they are in need of his/her comfort, support and prayers.

It is easy for the family to overlook certain items as they plan for the burial and the minister can be of help.

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The family should be asked for information for the obituary. It should not be long and contain only outstanding dates and events of the life of the deceased, such as: date and place of birth; name of parents; schools attended; military service (if any); date of marriage and name of spouse (maiden name if spouse is a woman); number of children; time of death; names of immediate relatives who preceded the deceased in death; names of close relatives now living.

The information in the obituary may be woven into the sermon to make it more personal. Favorite hymns and verses of scripture may also be mentioned. The desires of the family in these matters must be respected.

There are certain sensitive areas that the minister must take care to avoid.

To keep from embarrassing the family, such items as a previous marriage which ended in divorce, suicide of the deceased, death from alcoholism or drugs and other unfortunate matters should not be mentioned. Even though the deceased may have lived an immoral life, or may have been the victim of some social evil, the funeral service is not the place for the

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minister to launch a moral crusade.

One of the responsibilities of the minister is to comfort, strengthen and encourage the bereaved, and this should be kept in mind as he plans the service. The purpose in the funeral service is to comfort the living and to present the hope of the Gospel.

A Brief Home Service

If the main service is to be at the church, but a brief one is to be held at the home before proceeding to the church, it is advisable to make the home service brief. It should consist of a scripture reading, a few fitting remarks contrasting the temporary earthly home with the heavenly home, and closing with a suitable prayer.

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Church or Funeral Parlor Service

The order of service for a funeral is always subject to the desires of the family and circumstances surrounding the deceased. The following order is suggested, but may be altered in any way to suit the occasion.

Prelude

Call to Worship (see scriptures listed below)

Special Vocal Selection (or congregational hymn)

Prayer

Scripture reading

Obituary

Sermon

Special Vocal Selection

Benediction

Postlude

Calls to Worship (Funeral)

“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. “And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.” (Jn 11:25-26)

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“If you love Me, keep My commandments. “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever.”(Jn. 14:15-16)

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (Jn. 14:27)

“As a father pities his children, so the LORD pities those who fear Him.” (Ps. 103:13)

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” (Ps. 46:1)

“The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms;” (De. 33:27)

Scripture Reading (Funeral)

“The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me to lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul; he leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the

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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 runs over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.” (Ps. 23)

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though its waters roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with its swelling. Selah There is a river whose streams shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; ...The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah.” (Ps. 46)

“LORD, You have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever You had formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

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You turn man to destruction, and say, “Return, O children of men.” For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past, and like a watch in the night. You carry them away like a flood; they are like a sleep. In the morning they are like grass which grows up: In the morning it flourishes and grows up; in the evening it is cut down and withers. The days of our lives are seventy years; and if by reason of strength they are eighty years, yet their boast is only labor and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away....So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom....

Let Your work appear to Your servants, and Your glory to their children. And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands for us; yes, establish the work of our hands.” (Ps. 90)

“He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the LORD, “He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust.” Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; his truth shall be your shield and buckler. You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the

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arrow that flies by day, Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday. A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you. Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked. Because you have made the LORD, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place, No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling; For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways. In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone. You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot. Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation.” (Ps.91)

“I will lift up my eyes to the hills— from whence comes my help? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth. He will not allow your foot to be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, He who keeps Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade at your right hand. The sun shall not

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strike you by day, nor the moon by night. The LORD shall preserve you from all evil; he shall preserve your soul. The LORD shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore.” (Ps. 121)

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. “And where I go you know, and the way you know.” Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?” Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.... “If you love Me, keep My commandments. “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.... “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” (Jn 14

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“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written: “For Your sake we are killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.” Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Ro. 8:28-39)

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“For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living.” (Ro. 14:8,9)

“But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ’s at His coming.

Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father, when He puts an end to all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be destroyed is death....But someone will say, ‘How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?’ Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain—perhaps wheat or some other grain. But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts,

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another of fish, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, 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. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.... Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: “Death is swallowed up in victory.” O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?” The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.

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But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Co. 15)

“For we know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed with our habitation which is from heaven, if indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked. For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life. Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.” (2 Co.5)

“For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to

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depart and be with Christ, which is far better.” (Ph. 1:21-23)

“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.” (2 Ti. 4:6-8)

“Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’” “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.” (Re. 14:13)

“Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God.

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And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.” Then He who sat on the throne said, “Behold, I make all things new.” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” And He said to me, “It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. “He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.” (Re. 21:1-7)

Committal Service

The minister, standing at the head of the grave, may say:

Man that is born of a woman has but a short time to live and is full of trouble. He comes up and is cut down, like a flower, he flees from shadows, and never remains in one place.

In the midst of life we are in death: and to whom may we look for aid and comfort, but unto you O Lord?

Now, as it has pleased Almighty God in His

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infinite wisdom and mercy to take out of this world the soul of our brother/sister, we now commit his/her body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust.

Our brother/sister, however is not here. What lies here is only the house in which he/she lived among us for a season. Our brother/sister is now in the presence of God who judges the living and the dead.

Therefore let us take comfort in God’s promise of life after death.

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.” (1 Th. 4:14-18)

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“Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” (Mt. 24:44)

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

Post-Funeral Follow-up

Following are some things you can do after the funeral to assist families and loved ones.

- Ask volunteers from your church to prepare and serve a meal for the family and loved ones of the deceased following the services.
- Send a card after one month and on the first anniversary following the death, or ask someone to do this.
- Visit family members one week, one month, and three months after the funeral.
- Conduct a brief memorial service sometime in December of each year for anyone in your church who died during the last year.
- Obtain some good books about death, and give

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them to people who are grieving. *One Minute after You Die* by Erwin W. Lutzer (Moody Press) is an excellent example of books to have on hand.

- Assist the family in finding the help they need to deal with the immediate problems that occur as a result of a death. Some things they may need help with are: car or home repair, child care or help with an elderly family member.
- When you contact someone in grief always remember to pray with them.
- Remember that children grieve also and may need your encouragement.

Hospital Visitation: Rules and Guidelines

When visiting, sign in when possible and report your presence to the medical staff.

When possible, schedule visitations in the afternoon hours after meal times. To be respectful of family visitation, limit your evening hours or weekend visits to 5-10 minutes.

Carry a Bible that you can give away if necessary.

Hospital Visitation Rules and Guidelines

Pray with each person you visit and share a scripture that would encourage them.

When visiting, allow the medical staff and doctor priority, remembering that a pastor's time is often more flexible. If medical staff members are attending a patient when you enter the room, wait until they complete their services before beginning your ministry. If you are in the process of ministry when a member of the medical staff approaches the patient and interrupts, politely tell them that you will finish your ministry as quickly as you can. In the case of a medical emergency, yield immediately to the medical staff.

If a staff member or doctor is discourteous remember that you are a representative of the Lord Jesus Christ.

“A soft answer turns away wrath: but a harsh word stirs up anger.” (Prov.15:1)

Wash your hands before and after your visits in order to eliminate the spreading of disease.

Hospital Visitation Rules and Guidelines

ECA Standard Rules for Hospital Visitation

I will comply with each hospital's rules for pastoral visitation. If uncertain, I will check with the chaplain or hospital administrator's office.

When furnished, I will wear the identification badge in a clearly visible location with the photograph exposed.

I will always conduct myself in a professional manner as a minister of the Gospel.

I will focus my visit on members of my own congregation, nonmember patients who request a visit and patients whose families have requested a visit.

When making general visitation, I will ask permission of the patient and will respect the wishes of those who do not want a pastoral visit.

I will limit the time of my pastoral visitation to 5-10 minutes unless there are circumstances that require more time with a patient or their family.

Hospital Visitation Rules and Guidelines

I will not interrupt or interfere with medical treatments or examinations.

When visiting a patient who is not a member of my congregation, I will be respectful and mindful of their religious views and convictions.

When a patient's door is closed, I will request a member of the hospital staff to check if it is permissible to visit.

If the hospital allows a team visitation I will limit the visitation team to one other person and myself.

In restricted care units, or outside regular visiting hours, I will identify myself to the staff before visiting.

I will limit the use of my parking privileges to my professional functions as a pastoral visitor.

I will endeavor to develop and maintain open communication with the hospital staff.