

COMMISSIONING and INSTALLATION of OFFICERS

The commissioning and installation of church officers and workers, such as Sunday School teachers, youth advisors, etc., reinforces one of the fundamental tenets of the Congregational Way: the priesthood of all believers. Our service to God through our service to one another is the manner in which our priesthood is exercised. Many of the older manuals, such as William E. Barton's *Congregational Manual and Rules of Order* and Oscar Maurer's *Manual of the Congregational Christian Churches*, include orders, or forms for the commissioning and installation of church officers. Henry David Gray's *Congregational Worship Book* also offers several forms that can be useful. Again, as with the reception of new members, the ideal time for commissioning and installation of Church Officers and Workers would be sometime following the preaching of the Word and before the celebration of the Lord's Supper.

What follows is an order for commissioning/installation adapted from *Patterns of Worship* of the British Congregational Federation.

Introduction

In this service we are to commission/install [name(s)] who has/have been called to serve [name of Church] as [title of office].

It is good for us to remember that all who belong to the Church of Jesus Christ are called to serve one another in his name. Jesus calls us all to share in a life of discipleship and service: it is for us all to respond to that call in loving, faithful obedience.

Called to Serve

Installing Officer: Jesus said, "If one of you wants to be great, he must be the servant of all."

People: Master, we hear your call: help us to follow.

IO: Jesus said, "Unless you change and become humble like little children, you can never enter the kingdom of heaven."

People: Master, we hear your call: help us to follow.

IO: Jesus said: "Blessed are those who are humble, they will receive what God has promised."

People: Master, we hear your call: help us to follow.

IO: Jesus said: "Be merciful just as your Father is merciful; love your enemies and do good to them."

People: Master, we hear your call: help us to follow.

IO: Jesus said: “Love one another, just as I love you; for by this shall everyone know that you are my disciples if you have love, one for another.”

People: Master, we hear your call: help us to follow.

IO: Jesus said: “Go to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples and I will be with you always, to the end of the world.”

People: Master, we hear your call: help us to follow.

IO: Lord, you have redeemed us and called us to your service: give us grace to hear your word and to obey your commandment; for your mercy's sake. Amen.

Statement of Commission

(Those to be commissioned/installed are called forward)

IO: As we belong to the fellowship of the Church we all have a part to play in the life of the Church. Together with all who proclaim the Jesus Christ is Lord, we are a royal priesthood, God's own people. We are all called by God to proclaim the mighty acts of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light and to live out our lives the love of him who first loved us.

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

We rejoice today that [name(s)] is to be commissioned/installed as [title of office(s)]

It is the responsibility of a [title of office(s)] to: (here insert a brief summary of the responsibilities and qualities of the office(s))

The Right Hand of Fellowship

In the name of Jesus Christ and with the authority of this Church I extend to you the right hand of fellowship recognizing that God has called you to serve the fellowship of this Church as [title of office(s)].

May God bless you in the ministry which you now share with us all. Remember, in Peter's words, “Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God, whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so

that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen. “(1 Peter 4:10-11)

May God, who has begun this good work in you, give you the grace to complete it and to serve God's people in joy and peace. Amen.

(The right hand of fellowship is extended to those installed)

Prayer and Lord's Prayer