

# National Working Group on Worship

## Theology and Discipleship

### The Uniting Church in Australia

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Worship Service OC - 1

# A Service to Mark the Conclusion of a Placement

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## NOTES

- 1 A Service to Mark the Conclusion of a Placement is primarily for the conclusion of the placement of a minister of the Word or deacon, whose placement is with a congregation(s). If it is used to conclude a placement which has been exercised outside a normal congregation, as will be the case with many deacons, it will need to be adapted in a number of ways. Likewise, it will need adaptation if used for a youth worker or a community minister.
- 2 A Service to Mark the Conclusion of a Placement commences at The Sending Forth of the People of God in the Service of the Lord's Day, *Uniting in Worship, Leader's Book*. The whole service should follow the outline of the Service of the Lord's Day.
- 3 The Service should normally be held in one of the congregations in which the person concluding a placement has been working.
- 4 The minister being farewelled conducts the service, preaches the Word and presides at the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
- 5 The presbytery representative conducts A Service to Mark the Conclusion of a Placement.
- 6 The wording of the various elements of the service may be adapted or locally composed.
- 7 In this service, 'minister' refers to the minister whose placement is about to conclude. N denotes the minister's first name, and NNN his/her full name.
- 8 The list referred to where the minister says: 'I, therefore, hand this pastoral list to you with the of names of the people for whom I have cared ...' is more than the rolls of the congregation/s. It refers to the wider list of people to whom the minister has related in the course of his/her ministry.
- 9 Further resources are provided to use in the Service of the Lord's Day; their appropriate use is indicated under 'Other Resources'. They comprise:

- (a) Prayers of confession which allow both minister and people to recognise their failures and to accept God's forgiving grace. One of the options provided could be used as the prayer of confession in the Service of the Lord's Day.
  - (b) A Prayer of Thanksgiving, which may be included as part of the Prayers of the People if the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not included.
  - (c) The Peace, with an introductory dialogue.
  - (d) Special thanksgivings, one of which may be included if the standard Great Prayer of Thanksgiving is used (*Uniting in Worship, Leader's Book*, pp. 93-103).
- 10 Before the final prayer in A Service to Mark the Conclusion of a Placement there is opportunity for the chairperson of the congregation to farewell the minister and for a reply from the minister. This should be brief, as there may be more said at a social gathering in the church hall after the service.

[Why we do not include the Symbols used at Inductions in this Service](#)

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## **A Service to Mark the Conclusion of a Placement**

### **THE LETTING GO OF THE PASTORAL RELATIONSHIP**

*This Service is used at the Sending Forth of the People of God in the Service of the Lord's Day in Uniting in Worship.*

*The presbytery representative says:*

Since the church lives by the power of the Word,  
it is assured that God has never failed  
to provide a witness to that Word.

On *date*, the Presbytery of .....,  
inducted NNN as a minister of the Word / deacon among you.

We witnessed your promises to take part  
in the public worship of God,  
to contribute to the work of God,  
and to make a Christian witness in the community  
by word and action.

*Either*

The Presbytery believes that his/her ministry  
now lies in another place,  
and has confirmed his/her call  
to N (& N) congregation(s).  
The time has come to mark the end  
of his/her particular responsibilities  
in this/these congregation(s),  
and to send him/her with God's blessing  
to this new ministry.

*Or*

*The Presbytery has approved*  
the retirement of N from (date)  
*The time has come to mark the end*  
of his/her particular responsibilities  
in this/these congregation(s),  
and to send him/her with God's blessing  
to this new phase of life.

*The minister says:*

Brothers and sisters in Christ,  
you called me to minister with you,  
and charged me to preach the Word,  
preside at the sacraments  
and to oversee the pastoral life of the congregation.  
You have called / *will call* another minister in my place  
and I must lay down the tasks you committed to me.

I, therefore, hand this pastoral list to you  
with the of names of the people for whom I have cared,  
and ask you to continue to care for these people,  
and in due time, to share it with my successor.

*The secretary of the church council receives the list.*

*The presbytery representative says:*

And now, on behalf of the Presbytery of . . . . ,  
we thank you for your ministry of God's grace  
in this/these congregation/s.

We release you from this ministry,  
and commend you to the pastoral care  
of the Presbytery of ....

*Or*

We release you from this ministry,  
and will continue to give you pastoral care  
in this presbytery.

*Then follows either*

As you take up a new placement at ....  
we will pray for God's blessing  
on your continuing ministry.

*Or words such as*

*As you enter into retirement*  
we pray for God's blessing  
*on you in this new sphere of life.*

*The following is said or the Aaronic blessing may be sung. (See AHB 572.)*

Be strong and of good courage, do not be afraid:  
for it is the Lord who goes with you.  
Your God will not fail you or forsake you.

*Deut. 31:6*

*The chairperson of the congregation may briefly farewell the minister. The minister may reply.*

## **FINAL PRAYER**

*This or another suitable prayer may be used.*

*The presbytery representative says:*

Let us pray.

**O God, be with those who leave, and with those who stay;  
and grant that all of us, by drawing nearer to you,  
may always be close to each other  
in the communion of saints;  
through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord. Amen.**

*The presbytery representative concludes the service.*

# Other Resources

## 1 PRAYER OF CONFESSION (with introductory words)

*This prayer replaces the normal Prayer of Confession.*

*The minister says:*

This service will bring to a conclusion  
my ministry with you.

*An elder says:*

When you were inducted  
we promised to take part with you  
in the work of God by word and action,  
and you made solemn vows before God  
to serve faithfully among us.

In penitence and faith,  
let us confess our sins to almighty God.

*Then follows one of the following prayers of confession, or a similar prayer:*

*Either A*

*The minister offers this confession:*

I confess to God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
and to you my brothers and sisters,  
that I have sinned in thought, word and deed.  
I pray God to have mercy on me.

*The people respond:*

**May the merciful Lord grant you forgiveness of all your sins,  
and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

*Silence*

*An elder calls the congregation to pray:*

Let us confess our sins.

**We confess to God almighty,  
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,  
and to you our brother/sister,  
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed.  
We pray God to have mercy on us.**

*The minister says:*

May the merciful Lord grant you forgiveness of all your sins,  
and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*Or B*

*The minister offers this confession:*

I confess to you,  
Holy God, giver of light and grace,  
and to you my brothers and sisters,  
that I have sinned  
through ignorance, through weakness  
and through my own fault.  
I pray for God's mercy and forgiveness.

*The people respond:*

**May the merciful God forgive you,  
and grant you joy and peace,  
in God's pardoning grace. Amen.**

*Silence*

*An elder calls the congregation to pray:*

Let us confess our sins.

**We confess to you,  
Holy God, giver of light and grace,  
and to you our brother/sister,  
that we have sinned  
through ignorance, through weakness  
and through our own fault.  
We pray for God's mercy and forgiveness.**

*The minister says:*

May the merciful God forgive you,  
and grant you joy and peace,  
in God's pardoning grace. Amen.

## **2 THE PEACE**

*The following response may be used as the Peace.*

God calls us to peace.

**In God's justice is our peace.**

Christ calls us to be God's people:

**in Christ is our peace.**

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**And also with you.**

*The people may exchange the sign of peace.*

## **3 SPECIAL THANKSGIVING**

*In Uniting in Worship, Leader's Book, p. 93 a place is provided for Seasonal or Special Thanksgiving if the standard Great Prayer of Thanksgiving is used.  
One of the following may be used for this service.*

*Either A*

In every age Christ the Good Shepherd  
calls his faithful servants to preach the gospel,  
celebrate the sacraments of the new covenant  
and build up his people in faith and love.  
For he came not to be served, but to serve,  
and to give his life as a ransom for many.

And so we praise you  
with the faithful of every time and place,  
joining with choirs of angels and the whole creation  
in the eternal hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord ...**

*The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving continues on page 102.*

*Or B*

In our baptism you called us  
into the ministry of your church.  
By the Holy Spirit you lead us into all truth,  
giving us power  
to proclaim the gospel to the nations  
enabling us to serve you  
as your priestly people.

And so we praise you  
with the faithful of every time and place,  
joining with choirs of angels and the whole creation  
in the eternal hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord ...**

The Great Prayer of Thanksgiving continues on page 102.

#### **4      THANKSGIVING (for the prayers of the people)**

*If the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is not used, the following thanksgiving prayer may used  
to begin the Prayers of the People.*

*The minister calls the congregation to prayer, saying:*

Let us pray:

**O God, you bound us together for a time  
as minister and people  
to work for the advancement of your kingdom in this place:  
we give you humble and hearty thanks  
for the ministry which we have shared.**

**We thank you  
for your never-failing presence with us through these years  
and for the deeper knowledge of you  
and of each other which we have received.**

*Silence*

**We thank you for those  
who have been made members of Christ's family  
through baptism here.**



**We thank you for opening our hearts and minds  
again and again to your Word,  
and for feeding us abundantly with the sacrament  
of the body and blood of your Son.**

The Prayers of the People continue.

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