

The Rituals Of The Evangelical Church

**Published by
The Commission on The Discipline**

**Rev. Brian Eckhardt, General Superintendent
Dr. Bruce Moyer, Commission Secretary**

**Minneapolis, MN
2012 Edition**

Table of Contents

HOLY COMMUNION	1
HOLY BAPTISM	6
DEDICATION OF INFANTS	12
RECEPTION INTO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	15
HOLY MATRIMONY	22
BURIAL OF THE DEAD	28
A GENERAL FUNERAL SERVICE	34
ORDINATION OF ELDERS	38
BREAKING GROUND	45
DEDICATION OF A CHURCH	48
DEDICATION OF AN EDUCATIONAL BUILDING	55
DEDICATION OF A PARSONAGE	61
DEDICATION OF A HOME	64
MORTGAGE OR NOTE BURNING.....	67
INSTALLATION OF LOCAL CHURCH OFFICERS	69
INSTALLATION OF A CONFERENCE SUPERINTENDENT.....	73
INSTALLATION OF A MINISTER.....	76
INSTALLATION OF A MINISTER (<i>Alternate Service</i>).....	78
COMMISSIONING OF A MISSIONARY	81
COMMISSIONING TO SPECIAL MINISTRIES	83
RETIREMENT OF AN ELDER.....	84

HOLY COMMUNION

(THE LORD'S SUPPER)

The celebration of the Holy Communion can be traced in practice back to the Church of apostolic times. It is a conserving force that binds the Church together and gives us the consciousness that we are a part of the body of Christ in all ages and in all places.

The service is thoroughly evangelical in theology. It exalts God as the ruler of our hearts and conscience; it exalts Christ as the One, Who, both as sacrificing priest and sacrificial lamb offered Himself to the Father, without spot or blemish to shed His blood for the remission of the sins of the whole world. It insists that only as the individual in penitence and faith appropriates to himself the sacrifice which Christ made for his salvation, can that salvation be made efficacious for him.

It exalts the Holy Spirit Who effects the conviction of sin, the offer of God's mercy, the forgiveness of sins, the exaltation of Christ as Lord, and helps through this sacrament to strengthen the memory and the deeper consecration of life.

(Following the sermon, and after a suitable communion hymn the service may proceed as follows:)

INVOCATION

Almighty God, unto Whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from Whom no secrets are hid, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You and worthily magnify Your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

GOSPEL

When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it

again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.” After taking the cup, He gave thanks and said, “Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.”

(Luke 22:14-19 NIV)

APOSTLES’ 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 Spirit;
 born of the virgin Mary;
 suffered under Pontius Pilate;
 was crucified, dead and buried.
 He descended into hell.
 The third day He rose from the dead;
 He ascended into heaven;
 and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty;
 from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit;
 the holy general Church;
 the communion of saints;
 the forgiveness of sins;
 the resurrection of the body
 and the life everlasting.

Amen.

PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed by Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

(Matthew 6:9-13 NKJV)

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense – Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

(1 John 2:1-2 NIV)

(The Minister bowing or kneeling at the Lord's Table may offer the following prayer:)

CONSECRATION OF THE ELEMENTS

O God, Who in Your great mercy did give Your only Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption, we draw near with humility in the celebration of this memorial of His suffering and death. O merciful Father, we ask You to bless and sanctify us with Your Word and Spirit these Your gifts of bread and juice. Amen.

(Standing at the Lord's Table the Minister may say:)

For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

(1 Corinthians 11:23-26 NIV)

(Other Scripture such as Luke 22:14-19 or 1 Corinthians 10:16-22 may be used.)

(Then shall the Minister receive the communion in both hands and deliver it to other Ministers who may be assisting him.)

INVITATION

All you that truly and earnestly repent of your sins, and are in love and fellowship with your neighbors, and intend to live a new life, following the commandments of God and walking from henceforth in His holy ways, draw near with faith and take this holy sacrament at the invitation of Jesus Christ.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE ELEMENTS

(The Minister when he delivers the bread may say:)

The Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave His body for you, preserve your soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this bread in remembrance that Christ died for you. Feed on Him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

(When the Minister delivers the cup he may say:)

The Lord Jesus Christ, Who shed His blood for you, preserve your soul unto everlasting life. Drink this cup in remembrance that Christ shed His blood for you.

Partake of Him in your heart by faith with thanksgiving.

(At the conclusion of the communion of the people, the Minister may return the sacred vessels to the Lord's Table and reverently cover them.)

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

We praise You, O God, our Father, for the gift of Your Son, our Mediator, in Whose sacrifice You revealed Your redeeming love. What shall we give to You for all Your benefits to us? We will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord. We will pay our vows now in the presence of all His people. Let the people praise You, O God; let all the people praise You for Your mercy and Your truth. We praise You, O Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, for the atonement which You have made. We praise You, O Holy Spirit, for Your power of holiness that You have given to us. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

HOLY BAPTISM

(Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. It is proper and desirable that this Sacrament should not only be accompanied by prayer, admonition, and the reading of Scripture, as herein provided, but that it should be administered in the presence of the people, and most suitable in the house of God.)

1. THE BAPTISM OF ADULTS

(Each applicant for baptism shall confer with the Minister as to the significance, the mode, and the time and place of baptism; also as to his reception into the membership of The Evangelical Church.)

INVOCATION

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

SCRIPTURE

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.” With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles; teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION

Baptism is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ and administered by the Church from its beginning. It is a symbol of an inner cleansing from sin, a representation of the new birth in Christ Jesus and a mark of Christian discipleship.

It is the privilege and duty of the Church to administer the sacrament of baptism to those who, having repented of their sins and having accepted Jesus Christ as their Savior, present themselves for such service.

ADDRESS TO CANDIDATES

(The Minister shall call by name and invite those who are to be baptized, and shall address them as follows:)

We rejoice with you that, having considered the significance of Christian baptism, you now present yourself for this sacrament. We bid you to receive this ministry of the Church in simple trust toward Christ as your Savior, and in full obedience to Him as your Lord and Master.

We call to your attention again the Christian faith as set forth in the following historic statement of the Church: 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 Spirit; born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven; and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy general Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.

In order that this congregation may know that you are prepared to receive the sacrament of baptism, we ask you the following questions:

- a. Do you acknowledge and profess the Christian faith as taught in the Holy Scriptures? If so, answer: I do.
- b. Do you repent from sin and do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord? If so, answer: I do.
- c. Are you determined by the grace of God to live the Christian life? If so, answer: I am.
- d. Will you be baptized in the faith which you have now confessed? If so, answer: I will.

ACT OF BAPTISM

(The Minister, following the acceptable and pre-arranged mode for baptism shall proceed, using the following formula:)

...(Name)... , I baptize you in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER

Almighty and everlasting God, look with favor upon this person who we have baptized in Your name. Make Your grace abound in his/her life. Qualify him/her more and more for Christian living and for Christian service, and use him/her to the advancement of Your cause and the honor of Your name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BENEDICTION

To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.

(Jude 24-25 NIV)

2. THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS

(Arrangements for the baptism of infants of believing parents/guardians should be made with the Minister prior to the day of baptism, at which time the meaning of baptism should clearly be presented to the parents, together with their responsibility to rear the children in the Christian faith.

The Minister should obtain for the official record of the church, the name of the child, the place and date of birth, together with the names of the parents.

The child will then be presented by one or both parents, or guardian, upon the call of the Minister at the place and time of baptism. At that time the Minister shall call the names of the parents or guardian of each child to be baptized. While the parents are bringing the child, a suitable hymn may be sung or music played.)

INVOCATION

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION

Baptism is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ and administered by the Church from its beginning. Recognizing this child as under the atonement of Christ and as a part of the spiritual family of God, we consider him a worthy subject for Christian baptism. Children of believing parents through Christian baptism become a special responsibility of the Church. It is our duty as a Christian congregation to receive this child into the care of the Church, and to minister to his/her welfare in every way possible.

SCRIPTURE

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have Him touch them, but His disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, He was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And He took the children in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them.

(Mark 10:13-16 NIV)

ADDRESS TO PARENTS

You are presenting this child for Christian baptism. In so doing you manifest your concern for the spiritual welfare of this child and express your purpose to lead him/her in the way of Jesus Christ.

Hear the historic statement of our Christian faith:

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 Spirit; born of the virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose from the dead; He ascended into heaven; and sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy general Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen.

VOWS OF PARENT(S)

(The minister shall then ask the parent(s) the following questions:)

- a. Will you have your child baptized into this faith? If so, answer: I will.
- b. Will you seek to lead him/her to acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior, nurture him/her in the Christian life, and endeavor to bring him/her into the membership of the Church? If so, answer: I will.
- c. Will you do these things, thus helping him/her to confirm by his/her own action the dedication which we make today? If you will do these things, answer: I will, by the help of God.

(Where parents desire to have sponsors or special witnesses, there shall be an optional question asked of them as follows:)

- d. Will you who have come forward with these parents join them in making these vows? If so, answer: I will.

ACT OF BAPTISM

(The Minister, having dipped his hand into water, shall place it upon the child's head, saying:)

... (Name)..., I baptize you in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(The following question shall be addressed to the congregation:)

Do you as a congregation accept the responsibility of assisting these parents in fulfillment of the baptismal vows, and do you undertake to provide facilities and opportunities for Christian nurture and fellowship? If so, please indicate your purpose by standing.

(An optional response may be the statement: We will by the grace of God.)

PRAYER

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we thank You for regarding children as a part of Your spiritual household. We thank You that under the ministry of Your Spirit these parents have been led to dedicate this child to You in the act of baptism. We pray to You that Your blessing rest upon this child whom we have baptized; lead him/her into faith in Christ and grant unto him/her a renewal of life; give him/her victory over evil; make him/her strong to do Your service O God, and at last receive him/her into Your eternal abode.

We ask You to bless also these parents who have this day dedicated this child to You; baptize them with Your Spirit and enable them to fulfill the vows made before You and this congregation; keep them and their family united in the fellowship of Christ and His church, and at last bring them with all of us to be a part of that innumerable company of Your people in the world to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

DEDICATION OF INFANTS

(The following ritual is provided for the use of Christian parents or guardians who desire to reserve the Sacrament of Baptism until a later time when the child makes a personal commitment to Christ.

Arrangements for the dedication of an infant of believing parents should be made with the Minister prior to the day of dedication, at which time the meaning of dedication should be clearly presented to the parents or guardian together with their responsibility to nurture the child in the Christian faith. The Minister should procure for the official record of the church the name of the child, the place and date of birth and the names of the parents. The child will then be presented by one or both parents or guardian upon the call of the Minister at the place and time of dedication.)

INVOCATION

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ADDRESS TO THE CONGREGATION

The Scriptures bear witness of the fact that of old, godly 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 (1 Samuel 1:28).

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord.

(Luke 2:22 NIV)

We are confident, therefore, of divine approval today as this child is brought to the Church to be dedicated to God and His service. It is our duty as a Christian congregation to receive this child into the care of the Church, and to minister to his/her welfare in every way possible.

SCRIPTURE

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have Him touch them, but His disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, He was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And He took the children in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them.

(Mark 10:13-16 NIV)

(The Minister shall call the names of the parents or guardian of each child to be dedicated. While the parents are bringing the child, a suitable hymn may be sung or music played.)

ADDRESS TO PARENTS

You are presenting this child for dedication to God. In so doing you acknowledge this child to be a gift from God, for whose nurture and spiritual welfare you are responsible. It is proper that you declare your purpose to lead him/her in the way of Jesus Christ by answering the following questions before this congregation.

- a. Will you give an example of a Christian life and instruct and guide this child in Christian living? If so, answer: I will, by the help of God.
- b. Will you seek to lead him/her to a personal acceptance of Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, and endeavor to bring him/her into the membership of the Church? If so, answer: I will, by the help of God.

COMMITMENT OF THE CONGREGATION

(The Minister shall ask the following question of the congregation:)

Do you as a congregation accept the responsibility of assisting these parents in the fulfillment of these dedication vows? If so, answer: We will, by the help of God.

ACT OF DEDICATION

(The Minister, having taken the child in his arms, or having laid his right hand upon its head, shall say:)

...(Name)..., as a Minister of Jesus Christ, who laid His hands upon the heads of little children in blessing, I dedicate you to God and His Church, in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, we thank You for regarding our children as a part of Your spiritual household. We thank You that under the ministry of Your Spirit these parents have been led to dedicate this child to You. We pray that Your blessing will rest upon this child who we have dedicated and lead him/her into faith in Christ. Grant him/her a renewal of life; give him/her victory over evil; make him/her strong to do Your will, O God, and at last receive him/her into Your eternal abode.

We ask You to bless these parents who have this day dedicated this child to You; anoint them with Your Spirit and enable them to fulfill the vows made before You and this congregation; keep them and their family firmly united in the fellowship of Christ and His Church, and at last bring them with all of us to be a part of that innumerable company of Your people in the world to come, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

RECEPTION INTO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

1. Instruction to the Minister

The Minister shall instruct all candidates for church membership in the principles of the Christian life, in the faith and practice of The Evangelical Church and in the significance of the vows to be taken in becoming a member of the Church. Only when persuaded as to the genuineness of their faith and their understanding of and their willingness to observe the rules and regulations of The Evangelical Church, shall the Minister receive persons into the fellowship of the Church. The Minister shall ascertain whether or not the candidate has been baptized. If he learns that the candidate has not been baptized, he shall arrange with the candidate as to the time, mode and place of baptism.

It is recommended that baptism be held immediately before reception into membership in the Church and in connection with this reception. However, if time and occasion do not permit an orderly observance of this sacrament in connection with the candidate's reception into membership, the baptism may be held at some other time. In either case, the baptism shall be held according to the form prescribed in the ritual of holy baptism.

At the appointed time the Minister shall call the names of those persons to be received into membership of the Church on confession of faith, and have them come forward and stand at the front of the church, and then proceed according to the following ritual.

If there are candidates for membership to be received by transfer from other Evangelical Churches, the Minister at a proper time shall call their names and have them stand at the front of the church, with any other candidates, and shall then read aloud their certificates of transfer, and shall extend to them also the welcome into the fellowship of the Church.

If there are candidates for membership to be received by transfer from other evangelical denominations, the Minister at a proper time shall call their names and have them stand at the front of the church, with any other candidates, and shall then read

aloud their certificates of transfer. Also he shall ask them Questions 4, 5 and 6 of the membership vows; and, having received satisfactory answers to these questions, he shall extend to them, too, the welcome into the fellowship of the Church.

The reception of members ordinarily should take place at a public service of the church, but in the event that persons who have expressed their desire to be received into the fellowship of the Church but because of invalidism or other unavoidable circumstances find it impossible to be present at the public reception of members, the Minister may receive such persons privately as members of the Church, proceeding in the following manner. He shall visit them in their homes, accompanied by one or more officials of the church, and in their presence shall ask the candidates for church membership the questions prescribed in the following ritual. Having obtained from them an acceptable response to the questions submitted, the Minister shall receive them into the membership of the Church, and at the first public meeting thereafter he shall announce to the congregation the names of the persons so received.

Each application for membership in the Church, by confession of faith or by Certificate of Transfer, must be approved by the local Church Council in accordance with ¶¶/404, 407-413 of The Discipline of The Evangelical Church.

2. RECEPTION OF ADULTS INTO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

INVOCATION

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ADDRESS TO CANDIDATES

Christian friends, we rejoice with you that through the grace of God you have been brought to a knowledge of Christ our Lord and have been made partaker of this great salvation. We rejoice likewise, that you are seeking admission into the Church, which is the organized body of believers in Christ. We trust that through this fellowship you may grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord, and that you may become

qualified for larger and better service in the interest of His cause and kingdom.

MEMBERSHIP VOWS

In order that the congregation here assembled may know your purpose and be assured that you are a proper person to be received into the membership of The Evangelical Church, we ask you to answer the following questions:

- a. Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God, and that therein only is revealed the way of salvation, and do you take this Word to be your rule of faith and conduct? If so, answer: I do.
- b. Have you received Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord and do you now confess Him? If so, answer: I have received Him and do now confess Him.
- c. Do you promise to renounce all ungodliness, to follow Christ, to make diligent use of the means of grace and sincerely to seek the advancement of the Kingdom of God? If so, answer: Yes, by the help of God.
- d. Will you faithfully endeavor to know your privilege and responsibility as a Christian, and as a member of The Evangelical Church? Will you be loyal to the church, and sustain it with your regular attendance and uphold it with your earnest prayer? If so, answer: Yes, I will do so.
- e. Will you contribute of your means to the support of the church, as the Lord prospers you, and will you render Christian service according to your ability and opportunity? If so, answer: I will.
- f. Are you acquainted with the doctrines, spiritual and moral values of The Evangelical Church? Are you in harmony with them and will you adhere to them? If so, answer: I am and will do so by the help of God (¶¶101-220).

PRAYER

O Lord, as the great Head of the Church, give to this Your servant Your heavenly blessing, and grant that he/she may ever be faithful to You and to Your church. Help him/her to keep the vows which they have made. Enable him/her, we pray, to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Fill

him/her with the Holy Spirit. Make him/her fruitful in every good work. Keep him/her unto everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

WELCOME INTO FELLOWSHIP

(While the members of the Church stand, the Minister shall address the candidates as follows:)

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we welcome you into the fellowship of The Evangelical Church and of this congregation, and pray that God may unite us all in the bonds of Christian faith and brotherhood and make us strong and useful in His service. In token of our love and confidence, I now extend to you the right hand of Christian fellowship.

CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION

(While the members of the Church remain standing, the Minister shall address them saying:)

Members of ... (Local Name)... Evangelical Church, I commend to your love and care this person whom we have this day received into the fellowship of our church.

Will you enter into a covenant with him/her to cherish him/her in brotherly love and kindness as one with us in the Lord? If so, answer: By the grace of God, we will.

HYMN

(The congregation may then sing a hymn such as “Blest Be the Tie that Binds” or “I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord.”)

BENEDICTION

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.
Amen. (Philippians 4:7, 23 NIV)

3. RECEPTION OF CHILDREN OR YOUTH INTO CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

(Following careful instruction in the doctrines, spiritual culture, moral standards, and rules of The Evangelical Church, the Minister having procured from each child or youth a personal acceptance of and commitment to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, shall call the candidates before the congregation asking their parents and teachers to stand with them (§§715-718). The following service shall then be conducted.)

ADDRESS TO CONGREGATION

Dearly beloved, let us lift up our hearts in thanksgiving to Almighty God, Who by the Holy Spirit has caused these children (or youth) to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord and to seek membership in His church. They have come to a personal experience of salvation and now of their own accord present themselves before this congregation to take upon themselves the vows of the Church and to enter upon the privileges and duties of church membership. Let us with one mind and heart invoke upon them the blessings of our God.

PRAYER

(The Minister shall ask candidates, parents and teachers present to kneel, and shall pray as follows:)

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, giver of every good and perfect gift; accept our hearty thanks for these children (or youth) whom You have placed in our love and care. Let Your blessing continue upon each one who has come to this holy moment. Renew in Your servants, their parents, their pastors, and their teachers the wisdom and consecration to train them in the way that they should go. Grant that each of these children may grow in grace and in wisdom, and in favor with God and man; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ADDRESS TO CANDIDATES

(All will stand; the Minister shall say to the parents and teachers:)

Dear friends, this ought to be to you a day of rejoicing and thanksgiving, in that these who are your own have also entered

into the spiritual family of God through faith in Jesus Christ. While the church will continue to share with you the duty and privilege of bringing up these children (or youith) in the knowledge and counsel of the Lord, it renews its solemn injunction to you, by God's help, to teach faithfully by precept and example these whom God has entrusted to your care. Will you accept this duty, in the fear and favor of God, and will you in the presence of Almighty God and the members of this congregation, renew the vows made by you in the baptism or dedication of these children?

BAPTISM

(If deemed advisable the Minister may read these baptism or dedication vows. The parents or sponsoring friends shall answer: Yes, by the help of God we will.)

(As the members of the Church stand the Minister shall say to them:)

Will you, the members of ...(Local Name)... Evangelical Church enter into a covenant with these children (or youth) who now confess their faith in Christ and take upon themselves the vows of the Church; will you watch over them, instruct, counsel and cherish them with love, thoughtfulness and patience? If so, answer: Yes, by the help of God, we will.

DECLARATION OF FAITH

(The Minister shall address the children or youth:)

Dear Christian friends, our Lord Jesus by His Holy Word has expressly given to everyone who believes in Him a place in His church. It is needful now that you should declare your faith and purpose in the presence of this congregation by taking the following vows:

- a. Do you, each of you, believe in God as your heavenly Father? If so, answer: I do.
- b. Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, and do you promise to love, trust and obey Him all the days of your life? If so, answer: I do.
- c. Do you believe that the Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God, and do you promise to read it faithfully and to make it your guide for living? If so, answer: I do.

- d. Will you be loyal to The Evangelical Church and uphold it by your attendance, your prayers, your gifts, and your service? If so, answer: I will.
- e. Are you acquainted with the doctrines, spiritual and moral values of The Evangelical Church? Are you in harmony with them and will you adhere to them? If so, answer: I am and will do so by the help of God (¶¶101-220).

WELCOME INTO MEMBERSHIP

(The Minister may then offer an extempore prayer after which those who are to be received shall kneel as the Minister, laying his hands upon everyone in turn, shall say:)

As a Minister of the Church of Jesus Christ I welcome you into the fellowship of all true disciples of our Lord and pray that God may establish you in the faith and use you in His service. Amen.

THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

(The Minister shall ask the children or youth to stand and as he extends to each of them the right hand of Christian fellowship he shall call them by name and then say:)

We are pleased to recognize you as members of the Church of Jesus Christ and we welcome you to its rights and privileges. In token of our mutual love we extend to you the right hand of Christian fellowship, and pray that you may be useful members of the Church while you live and that finally you may be numbered with the saints in glory. Amen.

HOLY COMMUNION

(If desirable, the Minister may administer the Holy Communion to those who have been received, as the first act of their new relationship in the Church.)

HOLY MATRIMONY

(Before the ceremony the Minister should arrange a private interview with the couple to counsel with them concerning the Christian ideal of marriage. He shall at the same time assure himself by careful inquiry that no moral impediment exists why they may not rightfully be joined together in marriage. He shall also ascertain whether all legal requirements have been met.

At the time appointed for the solemnizing of the marriage, the persons to be married shall present themselves at the church, or other duly appointed place, and stand together facing the Minister, the woman to the left of the man.)

INVOCATION

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ADDRESS TO THE ASSEMBLY

We are assembled in the presence of God to unite this man and this woman in holy matrimony, which is instituted of God, regulated by His commandment, blessed of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to be held in honor among all people. It is becoming that the marriage relationship be entered into thoughtfully, advisedly, discreetly, reverently, and in the fear of God. Into this beautiful and holy relationship these two persons desire now to enter.

PRESENTATION

(In case the woman is given in marriage by her father, guardian, brother or friend, then the Minister may say:)

Who presents this woman to be married to this man?

I, her father (her mother and I; her guardian, brother, friend, etc.)

ADDRESS TO PERSONS TO BE MARRIED

I charge you both as you stand in the presence of God, to remember that love and loyalty alone will avail as the foundation of a happy home. If the solemn vows which you are about to make be kept faithfully and steadfastly you endeavor to do the will of your heavenly Father, your life will be full of joy, and the home you are establishing will abide in peace. No other ties are more tender, no other vows more sacred than those you now assume.

I entreat you both to seek the help of God in this sacred moment and to look to Him steadfastly for His love and grace which will make your marriage rich in comfort and fruitful in service.

DECLARATION OF INTENTION

(The Minister shall say to the man:)

M.M., will you have N.N. to be your wedded wife, to cherish her and live with her according to God's holy Word? Will you pledge your loyalty to her, and promise to love, honor, comfort and keep her, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and adversity, and keep yourself only unto her so long as you both shall live? If so, answer: I will.

(The Minister shall say to the woman:)

N.N., will you take M.M. to be your wedded husband, to cherish him and live with him according to God's holy Word? Will you pledge your loyalty to him, and promise to love, honor, comfort and keep him, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and adversity, and keep yourself only unto him as long as you both shall live? If so, answer: I will.

PRAYER

God of all grace and goodness, accept our thanks for the covenant of marriage which You have instituted. You have promised Your blessing to all who call upon You, bless this couple who are now about to be joined together in this holy relationship. Guide and sanctify them by Your Spirit, and fill them with a profound sense of the holy obligation of the vows they are about to make. Help them to look to You for Your assistance and to enter

into these sacred obligations in humble dependence upon Your enabling grace. Grant all of us these mercies, O Father, we ask, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

MARRIAGE VOWS

(The Minister shall direct the couple to join their right hands. The man shall take the following vows directed by the Minister:)

I, M.M., take you, N.N., to be my wife,...to have and to hold from this time forth...for better, for worse,...for richer, for poorer,...in health and in sickness,...to love and to cherish until death parts us,...according to God's holy Word,...and to this I pledge you my love and loyalty.

(The woman shall take the following vows as directed by the Minister:)

I, N.N., take you M.M., to be my husband,...to have and to hold from this time forth...for better, for worse,...for richer, for poorer,...in health and in sickness,...to love and to cherish until death parts us...according to God's holy Word,...and to this I pledge you my love and loyalty.

SINGLE RING CEREMONY

(The man and woman shall unclasp their hands and the Minister shall say to the man:)

What symbol do you offer that you will fulfill these vows faithfully?

(The man shall lay the ring in the palm of the Minister's hand, and the Minister shall say to the woman:)

Do you, N.N., accept this ring as a symbol that you will fulfill these vows faithfully? I do.

(Then the Minister shall say:)

This ring is a sacred symbol of your marriage. Its precious material is a type of the pure affection which should mark the relations of holy marriage. It is worn as a band of ornament and grace. May it be to you the symbol of your constant faith and abiding love.

PRAYER

Bless, O Lord, this ring, that he who gives it and she who wears it may abide in Your peace and continue in Your favor until their life's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Thereupon the woman shall take the ring from the palm of the Minister's hand and give it to the man, who shall place it upon the third finger of the woman's left hand. The man shall say, repeating the words after the Minister:)

With this ring I marry you,...and pledge to you my love and loyalty...until death parts us;...in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

DOUBLE RING CEREMONY

(The man and the woman shall unclasp their hands, and the Minister shall say to the man:)

What symbol do you offer that you will fulfill these vows faithfully?

This ring.

(The man shall lay the ring in the palm of the Minister's hand. Then the Minister shall say to the woman:)

What symbol do you offer that you will fulfill these vows faithfully?

This ring.

(The woman shall lay the ring in the palm of the Minister's hand. Then the Minister, holding both rings in his open hand shall say:)

These rings are sacred symbols of your marriage. Their precious material is a type of the pure affection which should mark the relations of holy matrimony. Their endless circle is a symbol of your faith and abiding love.

PRAYER

Bless, O Lord, these rings, that they who wear them may abide in Your peace and continue in Your favor unto their life's end. Amen.

(Then the Minister shall say to the woman:)

Do you, N.N., accept this ring as a symbol that you will keep this covenant and perform these vows? I do.

(Thereupon the woman shall take the ring from the palm of the Minister's hand and give it to the man who shall place it upon the third finger of the woman's left hand. The man shall say, directed by the Minister:)

With this ring I marry you,...and pledge to you my love and loyalty ... until death parts us;...in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(The Minister shall say to the man:)

Do you, M.M., accept this ring as a symbol that you will keep this covenant and perform these vows? I do.

(Thereupon the man shall take the ring from the palm of the Minister's hand and give it to the woman who shall place it upon the third finger of the man's left hand. The woman shall say, directed by the Minister:)

With this ring I marry you,...and pledge to you my love and loyalty...until death parts us;...in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRONOUNCEMENT OF UNION

(The Minister shall again direct the couple to join their right hands. With his right hand resting on theirs he shall say:)

Whom God has joined together let no person tear apart. Forasmuch as you, M.M., and you, N.N., have covenanted together in holy marriage before God, and have pledged your love and loyalty to each other, and have declared the same by giving and receiving rings and by joining hands, I now pronounce you husband and wife in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER

Eternal God, our Father, Creator and Preserver of all mankind, Giver of all spiritual grace, author of everlasting life, send Your blessing upon Your servants, this man and this woman whom we bless in Your holy name. Help them to live faithfully together, earnestly performing and sincerely keeping the vows and the covenant made between them. Keep them in perfect love and peace together, and enable them to live according to Your abiding laws. Let Your blessing be upon their home and all our homes. Enable them and all of us to do Your holy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BENEDICTION

God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve and keep you; the Lord mercifully with His favor look upon you and fill you with all spiritual benediction and grace, that you may so live together in this life that in the world to come you may have life everlasting. Amen.

(Where the bridal kiss is included, it should follow the benediction. When the couple desire to partake together of the Holy Communion, it is suggested that this be done between the final prayer and the benediction.)

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

1. A CHRISTIAN FUNERAL

INVOCATION

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER

Almighty God our eternal refuge and strength, grant unto us Your blessing in this hour. Lift our vision beyond the shadows of this world and help us to see the light of eternity that our spirits may grow calm and our hearts be comforted; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

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 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.

(Psalm 23 NKJV)

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day. Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; He lifts His voice, the earth melts. The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Come and see the works of the Lord, the desolations He has brought on the earth. He makes wars

cease to the ends of the earth; He breaks the bow and shatters the spear, He burns the shields with fire. “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. (Psalm 46 NIV)

(Other passages which may be used are Psalm 27, 39, 48, 90, 103:13-17, 121, 130 and for a child, 2 Samuel 12:16-23.)

(Then the Minister shall read one or more of the following Scripture passages:)

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am...If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Counselor to be with you forever – the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept Him, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him. But you know Him, for He lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live.” (John 14:1-3, 15-19 NIV)

(Other passages which may be used are: Matthew 5:3-11; 1 Corinthians 15:12-26; 35-38; 2 Corinthians 4:6, 13-17; 5:1; Revelation 22:1-5.)

(At the funeral of a child the following Scripture may be used:)

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a little child and had him stand among them. And He said: “I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in My name welcomes Me.” (Matthew 18:1-5 NIV)

“See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven. What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.”

(Matthew 18:10-14 NIV)

PRAYER

Eternal God, You are the hope and strength of all who trust in You, have mercy upon us and bless us. You have brought life and immortality to light through Jesus Christ Your Son, give us grace to believe in You, the resurrection and the life.

Grant us faith that we may contemplate the blessedness of that eternal home which You have prepared for all those who love and serve You. Let the peace of God abide in our hearts now and forevermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

Eternal God, the Father of our spirits, in Whose presence there is no darkness and no death; we worship and adore You in the ever-living God. To you, Lord Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life, Who has tasted death for every human being and Who has brought life and immortality to light, we praise Your name for the victory over death and the grave. To you Holy Spirit, the author and giver of life, the comfort of those who sorrow, in You is our sure confidence and our everlasting hope. Before You we worship and adore, saying, Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be unto our God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Eternal God, in Whose sight a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past and as a watch in the night, we confess that our life here is as the grass which is renewed in the morning and flourishes; and which in the evening fades and withers. Here in the presence of death we confess our mortality. So teach us to number our days that we may have a heart of wisdom. Hear our

prayer and give ear to our cry, O Lord, and grant us Your peace and Your life, for we are strangers with You, and sojourners as all our fathers were. But You, O God are the same, and Your years shall have no end. Amen.

O God, Whose days are without end and Whose mercies cannot be numbered, make us deeply sensible of the shortness and uncertainty of human life, and let Your Holy Spirit lead us through this present world in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life; that when we shall have served You in our generation we may be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience; in the communion of Your holy church; in the confidence of a certain faith; in the comfort of a reasonable, religious and holy hope; in favor with You our God, and in perfect love with the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord and Master, Who did weep beside the grave and are touched with the feeling of our sorrows; fulfill now Your promise that You will not leave Your people comfortless but will come to them. Reveal Yourself to Your servants and remind them of Your words, "I am the resurrection and the life." Help them, O Lord, to turn to You with true discernment and to abide in You through living faith; that, finding now the comfort of Your presence, they may have also a sure confidence in You for all that is to come; until the day break and these shadows flee away; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord, support us all the days of this troublesome life, until the shadows lengthen, and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over and our work is done. Then of Your mercy grant us a safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(At the funeral of a child the following prayer may be used:)

Eternal God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy upon us, and calm our troubled hearts with the quieting ministry of the Holy Spirit. Accept our thanks for little children, for the joy they bring and the graces they teach. Enable us to live in the

consciousness that our lives are richer and our love deeper because of our association with this child whom You have welcomed to Yourself. Help us to find our comfort in Him who took little children into His arms and blessed them. In the name of Him who lives to make intercession for us, grant us strength for all of life here, so that finally, when we come to the end of our earthly way, it may be in the triumphant faith that we shall be united again with our loved ones in the Father's house; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

AT THE GRAVE

SCRIPTURE

Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in Him.

(1 Thessalonians 4:13-14 NIV)

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were no so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.

(John 14:1-3 NIV)

Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or You brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God.

(Psalm 90:1-2 NIV)

COMMITTAL

Forasmuch as there has passed out of this life the soul of our (brother/sister), we therefore commit (his/her) body to its resting place, looking for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ at Whose coming in glorious majesty to judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead; and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in Him shall be changed and made like unto His

own glorious body according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.

Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

(Revelation 14:13 NIV)

(For the funeral of a child the following committal may be used:)

In infinite wisdom and love our heavenly Father has received unto Himself the innocent spirit of this little child. We therefore tenderly commit the body to its resting place in the sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection unto eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

(Matthew 6:9-13 NKJV)

PRAYER

O heavenly Father, Whose blessed Son, Jesus Christ, did weep at the grave, look with compassion upon these who are now in sorrow and affliction. Comfort them, O Lord, with Your abiding presence and cause them to hear You saying, "I am the resurrection and the life." Help them, O Lord, to turn to You in simple trust and to abide in You through a living faith in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BENEDICTION

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing His will, and may He work in us what is pleasing to Him, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

(Hebrew 13:20-21 NIV)

A GENERAL FUNERAL SERVICE

(This service is suggested for cases only where the deceased has not been known as a professing Christian.)

AT THE MORTUARY

In the name of God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms.

(Deuteronomy 33:27 NIV)

In quietness and trust is your strength.

(Isaiah 30:15 NIV)

SCRIPTURE

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.

(2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV)

Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He springs up like a flower and withers away; like a fleeting shadow, he does not endure.

(Job 14:1-2 NIV)

Do not boast about tomorrow, for you do not know what a day may bring forth.

(Proverbs 27:1 NIV)

But David took an oath and said, ‘Your father knows very well that I have found favor in your eyes, and he has said to himself, ‘Jonathan must not know this or he will be grieved,’ Yet as surely as the Lord lives and as you live, there is only a step between me and death.’”

(I Samuel 20:3 NIV)

The length of our days is seventy years – or eighty, if we have the strength; yet their span is but trouble and sorrow, for they quickly pass, and we fly away.

(Psalm 90:10 NIV)

Show me, O Lord, my life's end and the number of my days; let me know how fleeting is my life.

(Psalm 39:4 NIV)

Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment.

(Hebrews 9:27 NIV)

Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

(Psalm 90:12 NIV)

For we brought nothing in the world, and we can take nothing out of it.

(I Timothy 6:7 NIV)

Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry for help come to You.

(Psalm 102:1 NIV)

So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

(2 Corinthians 4:18 NIV)

Teach me Your way, O Lord; lead me in a straight path because of my oppressors.

(Psalm 27:11 NIV)

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

(Ecclesiastes 12:13 NIV)

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him; for He knows how we are formed, He remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear Him, and His righteousness with their children's children – with those who keep His covenant and remember to obey His precepts. The Lord has established His throne in heaven, and His kingdom rules over all.

(Psalm 103:13-19 NIV)

PRAYER

Eternal God, You are the consolation and strength of all who trust in You, grant Your sustaining grace to those who sorrow today. Lift our vision to see beyond this early life, and make us appreciate those spiritual values which are eternal.

Grant that we may follow with faith where You lead, so that when our days are finished upon this earth, we shall find our eternal abiding place with You. Have mercy upon us, we pray, in Jesus' name. Amen.

AT THE GRAVE

SCRIPTURE

I know, O Lord, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps.

(Jeremiah 10:23 NIV)

Guide me in Your truth and teach me, for You are God my Savior, and my hope is in You all day long.

(Psalm 25:5 NIV)

COMMITTAL

Forasmuch as the spirit of this loved one has departed, with cherished memories we therefore commit this body to its resting place, earth to earth, ashes to ashes; dust to dust; knowing that the end of all flesh is the grave; but that in God is our eternal hope.

PRAYER

Father in heaven, Who through Jesus Christ our Lord has revealed to us divine compassion in human sorrow, grant comfort to these sorrowing hearts today. Help them to turn to You in confident trust and abide in You through a living faith, that they may know through experience the comfort of Your presence, the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the reality of eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BENEDICTION

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

(Philippians 4:7 NIV)

ORDINATION OF ELDERS

(On the day appointed for the service of ordination the Conference Chair or someone duly authorized shall preach a sermon setting forth the duty and office of those to be ordained Elders. Then the Conference Chair shall proceed with the following service.)

INVOCATION AND CALL TO WORSHIP

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

(Isaiah 52:7 NIV)

PRESENTATION BY THE CONFERENCE SECRETARY

(The Conference Secretary shall read the names of those to be ordained, pausing after each while the person named shall rise and present himself before the Conference Chair.)

This Conference, having examined (this person) according to The Discipline of The Evangelical Church, is convinced that he has the qualifications for the Christian Ministry and has advanced him to the Order of Elder. I therefore, as Secretary of the ...(name of the Annual Conference)... of The Evangelical Church present him for ordination.

RESPONSE BY THE CHAIR

My brother, after due examination your fellow ministers are confident that you are called of God to the Christian Ministry, and as a testimony of their confidence and trust have authorized your ordination. This hour contains great spiritual significance. Its meaning to you will be determined largely by your own attitude and response. We ask you, therefore, to accept in the spirit of true humility and sincere dedication both the honor and the responsibility of this holy office.

PRAYER

Almighty God, giver of all good things, Who by the Holy Spirit has appointed Ministers in the Church, look with mercy upon this (these) Your servant(s) who has (have) come to be ordained (an) Elder(s). Fill (them) with Your truth and adorn (them) with purity of life so that both by work and example (they) may faithfully serve You in this office to the glory of Your name and the edification of Your church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of His power. Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

(Ephesians 3:7-9 NIV)

It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

(Ephesians 4:11-13 NIV)

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

(Matthew 28:18-20 NIV)

ADDRESS OF THE CHAIR

My brothers, you have heard of what dignity and of what great importance it is to be ordained. We exhort you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that you consider well the responsibility of being

messenger(s), (watchmen), and steward(s) of the Lord. You are to teach and to admonish, to feed and provide for the Lord's family, to seek the lost, to proclaim the glad tidings of the gospel of God, and to care for His children, for they are the sheep of Christ for whom He shed His precious blood. Wherefore, consider the exalted purpose of your ministry, and how great a treasure is committed to your charge.

The church which you are to serve is His holy body. And if His church, or any member thereof, suffers harm through your negligence you know the greatness of the fault.

Make sure, therefore, that nothing may ever be wanting in your labor, care or diligence, that you may do all that lies in your power to bring the unsaved to Christ and to lead all who are committed to your charge to such a knowledge of God and maturity in Christ, that no place be left for error in doctrine or waywardness of life.

Consider seriously, therefore, how diligent you ought to be in the study of the Scriptures, and in regulating the conduct of (yourselves) and your (families) so that you may be godly example(s) for all people to follow. Apart from the power of God you cannot do this. Therefore, we exhort you to pray earnestly and daily for the help of the Holy Spirit. We have confidence that you have weighed and pondered these things long before this time, and that you have fully determined by the grace of God to give (yourselves) wholly to this calling and to devote all your studies and efforts to become good minister(s) of Jesus Christ.

And now, that the assembled congregation may understand your purpose and promise, we ask you in the name of God and His church to affirm your faith and take these solemn vows.

EXAMINATION BY THE CHAIR

1. Do you believe that you are called according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ to the Christian Ministry and the Order of Elder? If so, answer: I do.
2. Do you believe in the Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, and are you persuaded that therein only is revealed the way of salvation through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, answer: I do and am so persuaded.
3. Are you determined to instruct the people out of the Holy Scriptures, and to teach nothing as necessary to eternal

salvation but what is taught in the Scriptures? If so, answer: I am so determined.

4. Will you faithfully administer the sacraments of the Church as the Lord has commanded? If so, answer: I will.
5. Will you loyally maintain the doctrines and polity of The Evangelical Church? If so, answer: By the help of God, I will.
6. Will you be diligent in prayer, reading and searching the Holy Scriptures, and will you pursue such studies as aides in helping you increase your knowledge of God and his kingdom? If so, answer: I will.
7. Will you earnestly endeavor to regulate your conduct and the conduct of your family according to the spirit and teachings of Christ that you may be godly examples for all people to follow? If so, answer: I will endeavor to do so.
8. Will you maintain and promote peace, quietness, love and unity among all Christians, and especially among those committed to your charge? If you will do this, answer: I will endeavor to do so.
9. Will you reverently nurture with a glad heart and a willing mind, those committed to your care according to the regulations of The Evangelical Church? If so, answer: I will do so, the Lord being my helper.
10. Will you devote yourself with all zeal and faithfulness to the extension of the kingdom of God in the place that you are assigned to? If so, answer: I will endeavor through the grace of God to do so.
11. The Almighty Who has given you the will to do all these things, also grant you strength and power to perform the same, that He may accomplish the good work which He has begun in you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SCRIPTURE

When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.”

Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you truly love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.”

The third time He said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.”

(John 21:15-17 NIV)

PRAYER

(The wife of each candidate may be invited to join her husband along with invited Elders; all will kneel for prayer.)

Let us pray for (these) who (are) to be ordained.

(After a period of silent prayer the “Veni Creator Spiritus” may be alternately spoken by the Chair and those assisting him, together with the candidate(s) being ordained.)

Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire, And lighten with celestial fire.

Thou the anointing Spirit art Who dost Thy sevenfold gifts impart.
Thy blessed unction from above is comfort, life and fire of love.

Enable with perpetual light, The dullness of our blinded sight.
Anoint and cheer our soiled face With the abundance of Thy grace.

Keep far our foes; give peace at home,
Where Thou art Guide no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son, And Thee, of both to be but One.

That through the ages all along,

This may be our endless song:

“Praise to Thy eternal merit, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.”

(The last couplet to be said in unison by the candidate(s) and those assisting.)

HYMN

(The following hymn may be sung at this point, or the words of the hymn may be substituted for the “Veni Creator Spiritus.” The hymn may be sung just prior to presenting the certificates of ordination.)

“A CHARGE TO KEEP I HAVE”

A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify,

A never-dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky.

To serve the present age, my calling to fulfill;

O may it all my pow’rs engage to do my Master’s will.

Arm me with watchful care as in Thy sight to live,

And now Thy servant, Lord, prepare a strict account to give!

Help me to watch and pray, and on Thyself rely.

And let me ne’er my trust betray, but press to realms on high.

ORDINATION

(With the candidates still kneeling, the Chair and two or more Elders including the Conference Superintendent(s) shall lay hands upon each of them in turn, and the Chair shall say:)

The Lord pour upon you the Holy Spirit for the office and work of an Elder in the Church of God, now committed unto you by the authority of the Church through the laying on of our hands, in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(The Chair shall deliver to each of them in turn the Holy Bible, and say:)

You now have the authority to preach the Word of God and to administer the holy sacraments in the Church, in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER

Most merciful Father, impart to these Your servants the riches of Your grace, and the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit, that with clearness of discernment and readiness of speech they may declare the whole counsel of God to all to whom they are sent; and that through their work the Church may be strengthened and encouraged in godliness. Grant that in all things they may seek Your glory and the increase of Your Kingdom. O merciful Father, our hope is in You.

Grant us Your gracious presence and help, that in all our living and work we may worthily glorify Your holy name and by Your grace inherit eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES

Brother ...(Name)... , on behalf of The Evangelical Church I now present you this Certificate of Ordination.

BENEDICTION

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

BREAKING GROUND

INVOCATION AND ASCRIPTION OF PRAISE

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or You brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting You are God.

(Psalm 90:1-2 NIV)

HYMN

“O God, Our Help in Ages Past.”

SCRIPTURE

Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.

(Matthew 7:24-27 NIV)

PRAYER

O God, Who lives in the high and holy place of eternity and Who needs not the work of men’s hands: heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You, yet You come to meet with Your people when they build a building where they can worship You. You are our God forever more, blessed be Your holy name.

We come in humility to set apart a plot of ground whereon to build a sanctuary to Your glory. This day we propose to break the ground that a solid foundation may be laid that the house we build may stand. But before we can break this ground we need the assurance of Your divine blessing. Grant, therefore, O Lord, we ask You to accept the purpose of our hearts and give Your blessing to the work of our hands.

As we erect here a sanctuary to Your name, protect it in the process of its erection, protect with Your almighty power the workmen who shall labor here.

And grant, O merciful Father, that this house which we build may ever speak to the passers-by of Your Name and Your Gospel; that it may be a light to all who walk in darkness, that it may be a place of comfort and refuge for the sorrowful; that it may encourage all who are depressed in heart and mind; that it may lift our hearts unto You in praise and thanksgiving and joyfulness; that it may help us through Your grace in all the days of our life, that when we shall have come to the close of our earthly pilgrimage, we may meet together with all those whom we have loved and with whom we have labored, in that better sanctuary where we shall praise and glorify Your holy name, world without end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Here an offering may be received and special music enjoyed.)

RESPONSIVE READING

The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof: the world, and they that dwell therein.

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

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His holy place?

He that has clean hands, and a pure heart: Who has not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sword deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

This is the generation of them that seek Him, that seek Your Face, O Jacob.

Lift up your heads, O gates; and be lifted up, 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.

Put off Your shoes from off Your feet, for the place you stand is holy ground.

Surely the Lord is in this place: And I know it not. This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

Except the Lord built the house, they labor in vain that build it.

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,

Unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

(Here the address or sermon may be delivered.)

GROUND BREAKING

(As the first shovelful of earth is turned the Minister and the people shall say:)

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
We break this ground. Amen.

(Following this, officials and selected persons may turn over one or more shovelfuls of earth as a part of the ceremony without repeating the above words. A hymn may be sung, such as “Lead on, O King Eternal”.)

BENEDICTION

To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore!
Amen.

(Jude 24-25 NIV)

DEDICATION OF A CHURCH

(After an appropriate service of worship including the sermon and the offering, the following order may be observed:)

INVOCATION

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

MINISTER’S STATEMENT

Beloved in Christ, we are now gathered in solemn assembly at this sacred hour before the Lord our God, maker of heaven and earth, source of every good, to dedicate unto Him this house which we have built for the honor of His name and for the extension of His kingdom.

PRESENTATION OF THE KEY

(The Minister shall request the members of the building committee and the Board of Trustees to present themselves at the front of the church. The Chair of the building committee shall present to the Minister the key of the church. The Minister shall then present the key to the Chair or other officiating Minister, and shall say:)

The building committee appointed to supervise the erection of this church has completed its work, and now presents to you the key of the church and requests you to dedicate the building and present the key to the President of the Board of Trustees.

SCRIPTURE

For the Lord has chosen Zion, He has desired it for His dwelling: “This is My resting place forever and ever; here I will sit enthroned, for I have desired it – I will bless her with abundant provisions; her poor will I satisfy with food.”

(Psalm 132:13-15 NIV)

Now, my God, may your eyes be open and your ears attentive to the prayers offered in this place. Now arise, O Lord God,

and come to Your resting place, You and the ark of Your might. May Your priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, may Your saints rejoice in Your goodness. O Lord God, do not reject Your anointed one. Remember the great love promised to David Your servant.

(2 Chronicles 6:40-42 NIV)

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of His robe filled the temple. Above Him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying. And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of His glory.”

(Isaiah 6:1-3 NIV)

Lift up your heads, O you gates; be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may 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 them up, you ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is He, this King of glory? The Lord Almighty – He is the King of glory. (Psalm 24:7-10 NIV)

ADDRESS

(Then shall the Chair say:)

It becomes us in this high and holy hour to bow in worship before the Lord our God.

The Most High does not dwell in temples made with hands, yet He commanded His servant Moses to build a tabernacle, and prepare a place for Him, where His honor would dwell. And then at the dedication of the tabernacle, and afterward at the dedication of the temple God sanctioned and confirmed the work by the revelation of His glory, and blessed His people there. Our Lord has also given us the blessed assurance that He will meet with His people wherever they assemble themselves in His name. Thus reassured, we feel that God will accept this house which we have built to His glory.

Having this confidence, we now dedicate this house unto the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be His sanctuary and dwelling place, where His Word shall be preached, the sacraments administered, and such other services held according to the order and The Discipline of The Evangelical Church.

To this end we also dedicate ourselves to Him with all that we are and possess, without reservation, to be His through the covenant of grace by Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Either FORM I or FORM II below may be used at the discretion of the Minister of the church, and of the Chair or other officiating Minister.)

FORM I

PRAYER

Lord God of our fathers, Your people have built this house for worship and glory.

You are above all the heavens and You fill the immensity of space with Your greatness and omnipresence. We ask You to accept this house in the name of Your Son our Savior. You dwelled in the temple of old, and wherever two or three are gathered in Your name, you are present. So make this place Your habitation, that it may show forth Your power and glory from time to time in the salvation of sinners and the edification of Your people, that this house may be preserved from all unholy purposes and exercises, and be devoted to Your service alone, and to the redemption and upbuilding of mankind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

THE LITANY

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we dedicate this church to Christian worship.

God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.

We dedicate this church to the training of children in the knowledge and experience of God, to the summoning of youth to a life of Christian service, and to the sanctification of the family.

Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth.

We dedicate this church to the spiritual enrichment of all; to the guidance of those in trouble, the direction of those who have erred, the help of those confused and distressed, the consolation of the dying and the comfort of the bereaved, and to the hope of eternal life.

“Behold, all souls are Mine,” says the Lord. “Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these My brothers, you did it to Me.”

We dedicate this structure to the task of the Church of our Savior Jesus Christ, to evangelism and education, social service, economic and civic righteousness, Christian unity, and international good will, the kingdom of God and the brotherhood of man.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

We dedicate this church to world-wide missionary endeavor that the kingdom of this world may become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the world.

We dedicate this church in loving memory of those who in former years built spiritual foundations in faithful service, and with deep gratitude for those who have labored and prayed to make this building possible, also to those who in years to come shall worship God and His Christ here.

Breathe on me, Breath of God, Fill me with life anew, That I may love what You love, And do what You would do.

(Continue with The Dedication which follows FORM II.)

FORM II

(The following prayer shall be offered, the people responding with an "Amen" at the end of each petition:)

Eternal and Almighty God, You who dwells in Your majesty above all the heavens and by Whose greatness and omnipresence the immensity of space is filled, but Who, in Your great love and mercy, did condescend to dwell among Your people on earth, even where two or three are assembled in Your name, be pleased, O Lord, to come to us in this place and bless us as we are here assembled to dedicate this house to You. Grant that this house may be preserved from all unholy purposes, assemblages, and exercises, and be devoted to Your service alone, and to the redemption and upbuilding of mankind; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Accept, O Lord, our God, this our offering, which we, in humility give unto You. Grant that Your favor and good pleasure may rest upon this place and that the Holy Spirit, with all His gifts, may be given for our salvation and Your glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hear, O Lord, Your servants as they pray to you in this place. Give to them the graces and gifts of Your Holy Spirit, that they may serve You with reverence and confidence, that, realizing their unworthiness, but filled with the spirit of power, love, and godly fear, and clothed with holiness, they may stand before You and perform the duties of their office acceptably in Your sight, and beneficially to men; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, that all who in this house shall be dedicated to You by Christian baptism, may also receive the regeneration and sanctification of the Spirit, and always remain vital members of Your church. Grant, O Lord, that all who take Holy Communion in this place may receive it in humility, faith, and love.

Grant that they may be saved from all sin, filled with divine life, sanctified by the blood of the covenant, and thus serve You faithfully unto the end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, that in this place Your precious Word may always be preached in purity, and in the demonstration and power of the Holy Spirit; that all who hear it may understand and receive it into their hearts, and by the assistance of Your grace, obey and keep it blameless unto eternal life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, that the congregation which worships here may be kept in the unity of the Spirit and in the bonds of peace, that they may serve You in the faith of the Gospel, in a blameless life, and that they may continually prosper by Your favor and grow in grace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And now, O Lord, arise and dwell in this place. Hear the prayers and supplications of Your servants, and all who seek You in this place. Let Your eyes be open day and night to protect and show mercy to all who appear before You and magnify Your grace to all generations. Grant that Your servants may go before You and Your people, clothed with salvation, and may Your saints rejoice in Your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grant, O Lord, that we Your people, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, may grow into a holy temple in the Lord, built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit. Grant that we all may be brought at last into that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, to the honor, praise, and glory of God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Those who have used either FORM I or FORM II should continue to use the remainder of the service as follows:)

THE DEDICATION

We, the ministry and people of this congregation, surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, with gratitude for our heritage and appreciation of the sacrifice of our fathers, do now consecrate ourselves to the furtherance of God's cause at this place, and do at this moment dedicate this building unto God Almighty, and declare it to be The Evangelical Church of ...(name/location)... in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

ADDRESS TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

(The Chair shall request the members of the Board of Trustees to present themselves at the front of the church. The Chair shall have in his hand the key to the church house, and shall say:)

You have been selected by the church to the responsible position of Trustees of this house of worship, which has now been dedicated to God. The house of God is sacred; it is God's holy temple, where He is to be worshiped in the beauty of holiness and love; therefore, do nothing in vain glory, but by love serve one another. Nothing should enter this sacred place that will defile the temple of God; but at the same time let it ever be remembered that all works of justice, of mercy, of love, of helpfulness of whatsoever kind, are proper in the house of God. Protect this house of God at all times; preserve it for constant service; improve it as need arises.

Help keep this a holy place, and with the other officers assist the Minister in winning men and women to God and His church through the Lord Jesus Christ. In the name of the Holy Trinity, I now give to the President of the Board of Trustees this key as the symbol of your authority over this property, to hold it in trust for God and The Evangelical Church. May faith, hope and love always guide you in your task remembering that except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen

(Here may be sung the Doxology.)

BENEDICTION

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

(Ephesians 3:20-21 NIV)

DEDICATION OF AN EDUCATIONAL BUILDING

(To be used for an educational unit of the local church, or for a college or seminary building.)

INVOCATION

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

DECLARATION

By the grace of God and the labor of many, we are privileged to behold this completed structure, a token of the wisdom and goodness of God and of the obligation of each generation to impart its treasures of wisdom and knowledge to the generations following. For the hallowed task and sacred responsibility of transmitting and interpreting truth to successive generations for the purpose of research into the vast and intricate mysteries of the created universe, to the end that the experience of maturing persons shall be enriched by a truly Christian culture and achieve the spiritual values of life in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Church needs the finest possible instrumentalists and agencies, and the best equipment that man can provide under the blessing and guidance of God.

In this hour we praise our God, and give thanks unto our holy and sovereign Father for His guiding wisdom, abounding strength, and divine aid in this enterprise. We thank Him for those who by their gifts and service unite and shall unite in fulfilling the purpose for which this building is prepared. Let us all with one voice sing our praises to God, in the name of Jesus Christ.

(The congregation may sing: "The Church's One Foundation," or "Christ is made the Sure Foundation," or another appropriate hymn.)

SCRIPTURE

Blessed is the man who finds wisdom, the man who gains understanding, for she is more profitable than silver and yields better returns than gold. She is more precious than rubies; nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is

in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor. Her ways are pleasant ways, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who embrace her; those who lay hold of her will be blessed.

(Proverbs 3:13-18 NIV)

My son, preserve sound judgment and discernment, do not let them out of your sight; they will be life for you, an ornament to grace your neck. Then you will go on your way in safety, and your foot will not stumble.

(Proverbs 3:21-23 NIV)

Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord. Blessed are they who keep His statutes and seek Him with all their heart. They do nothing wrong; they walk in His ways. You have laid down precepts that are to be fully obeyed.

(Psalm 119:1-4 NIV)

Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.

(Matthew 7:24-27 NIV)

(If desired a second hymn may be sung; a brief address may be delivered; an offering may be taken.)

RESPONSIVE READING

Wisdom has built her house, she has placed her seven pillars.

Does not wisdom cry? And understanding put forth her voice?

She stands in the top of high places, by the way in the gates of the paths.

She cries at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors.

Unto you, O men, I call; and My voice is to the sons of man.

O you simple understand wisdom: and you fools, have an understanding heart.

Hear: for I will speak of excellent things; and the openings of My lips shall be right things.

For My mouth shall speak truth: and wickedness is an abomination to My lips.

Receive My instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than rubies: and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge of witty inventions.

The fear of the Lord is to hate evil.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.

DEDICATION

(The Trustees, or another proper committee, shall stand before the people and one of them shall say to the Minister:)

This building is presented to you to be dedicated to the service of Almighty God in the enlightenment of His children.

(The people shall stand while the Minister pronounces the following declaration:)

Buildings erected for service in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, rightly and properly should be formally and devoutly set apart for their special uses. For such a dedication we are now assembled. The dedication of this building is vain without the solemn consecration of those whose gifts and labors it represents. We, therefore, now give ourselves anew to the service of God; our labor, that it may be according to God's holy will, and that its fruit may tend to the glory of His Name and the advancement of His Kingdom; our bodies, that they may be fit temples for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; our souls, that they may be renewed after the image of Christ.

(The following may be used for the dedication of a local church educational building:)

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we dedicate this building to the holy ministry of Christian education. Let all the people say: Amen.

We dedicate this building to the growth in Christlikeness and in spiritual power of all those who shall seek Christian guidance in this place. Let all the people say: Amen.

We dedicate this building to the faithful, self-denying service of those who shall be called to lead others into the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Let all the people say: Amen.

We dedicate this building to the continual search for abundant life that is in Christ, both for each individual and for the world. May all that is done within these walls redound to the honor and glory of God in unfolding human life. Let all the people say: Amen.

(The following may be used for the dedication of a building at an institution of higher education:)

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we dedicate this building to the holy ministry of Christian education. Let all the people say: Amen.

We dedicate this building to the spiritual enrichment of all those who shall come here in the pursuit of knowledge. Let all the people say: Amen.

We dedicate this building to the loyal service of those whose training and devotion have prepared them to lead students toward the truth. Let all the people say: Amen.

We dedicate this building to the ministry of administration upon whose ability and faithfulness depends the wise conduct of its affairs. Let all the people say: Amen.

Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time? Blessed is that servant whom his master when he comes will find so doing. Let all the people say: Amen.

(The Minister may offer one of these prayers:)

Holy and Eternal Father, Who rules the universe and dwells in all parts of the earth in wisdom, majesty and strength, Who observes the ways of all creatures and gives compassion upon high and low alike, we humbly worship You and give thanks to You for Your great goodness. Your eyes are ever open to the works of all people and Your ears are never shut to their cries. We thank You, we praise You, we glorify You in the completion of this building which we have just dedicated in Your name and to Your service. Make love and wisdom here unite to make plain the path of knowledge to those who give and those who receive instruction in this place. Make Your Word a flame to kindle the hearts and purify the lives of administrators, teachers, and pupils who shall minister in this place. Grant to each of those who come here pure minds, upright purpose, and steadfast endeavor to learn and to do Your holy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of Love, we thank You for Your faithful ones in all the earth, for parents, teachers, benefactors and servants, by whose love and devotion we have come into our great inheritance of health, truth and piety. Help us hold these in sacred trust and pass them on to succeeding generations unsullied and undiminished; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Merciful Father, guide at all times the thoughts and the labors of Your people, so that Your purposes shall ever be fulfilled in their lives. Grant them all to know that which is worth knowing, to love that which is worth loving, to praise that which pleases You most. Grant them true judgment to distinguish truth from error, courage to disdain all that is evil, and strength to do all those things which we know to be right in Your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

And now, Lord God of our fathers, we give this house to You. You have been our Creator, our Redeemer, our Preserver, our Counselor and Guide. You have taught us the way of life. In You we live and move and have our being. We pray that You will accept this building as a place where Your name shall be honored and where Your holy will shall be made known. May many precious souls be brought to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ within these walls. And

may the teaching ministry of this church be always loyal and true to You and to Your holy Word. To this end we dedicate ourselves anew as we set apart this building for the furtherance of Christian education. And to Your name, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit we will give endless praise. Amen.

BENEDICTION

To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore. Amen.

(Jude 24-25 NIV)

DEDICATION OF A PARSONAGE

(The introduction and Scripture readings with prayer as prescribed for the “Dedication of a Home” become the first part of this ritual. The service may be opened with an instrumental prelude and a suitable hymn. The service may then be continued by the following declaration by the Minister:)

INVOCATION AND DECLARATION

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Peace be to this house. Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Home was the first institution created by God for His children. Before the state, the school, or the Church was established, the home had come into being.

It was the cradle of religion, of education, of government and of civilization. We have come to invoke the divine blessing upon this home, so that its ties of love may be strong and beautiful through the blessing and inspiration of the heavenly Father.

(The people may stand and sing the Doxology.)

PRAYER

(The Minister may offer a prayer, closing with following verse:)

O God whose gracious presence blessed The home at Bethany,
This shelter from the world’s unrest,
This home made ready for its Guest,
We dedicate it to You.

We build an altar here, and pray that You will show Your face.
Dear Lord, if You will come to stay,
This home we consecrate today will be a holy place. Amen.

(The Minister may read the following: Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Luke 10:38-42.)

Minister: Who presents this parsonage to be dedicated?

(The Trustees or another appropriate committee shall stand before the assembled people and a representative of the Board of Trustees or the other committee shall respond:)

Trustee: We present unto you this building to be dedicated to the service of Almighty God through its use as a dwelling place for the Minister of our church and his family. We present to you this key (offering the key to the pastor who shall take it) which locks and unlocks the doors of this house. With it we pledge our willingness to keep this house for its intended use.

CHARGE BY THE MINISTER TO THE TRUSTEES

Members of the Board of Trustees: In the presentation of this key you have shown your willingness to have this house dedicated. By the generous gifts which have made this possible, you have hereby given recognition to the high place of the ministry, and the importance of making wise provision for the temporal needs of those who administer its sacred offices.

You who have been chosen to serve as Trustees are required to act on behalf of the Church in exercising careful oversight of this property. It is important that it shall be kept in good repair and present an attractive and inviting appearance so that its silent influence in the community may contribute to the glory of God.

Therefore, in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I charge you to administer faithfully the duties incumbent upon you as trustees of this parsonage.

With the giving of ourselves and our gifts we dedicate this building to the holy ministry of sheltering the family that has a peculiar relationship to this congregation and community. We are concerned that it stand for spiritual enrichment of all who shall step across its threshold. Let it fulfill a vital role in creating good fellowship among members of this parish; let it help to enhance the ability and faithfulness of those who reside here that there may be wise conduct of the affairs of this congregation.

For this purpose, in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we dedicate this building as the parsonage of the (Church or Charge) of The Evangelical Church.

PRAYER

O God, our heavenly Father, giver of life, we pray that You make this home a home of light and love. Grant that all that is pure, tender, and true, may shine from this home. Let all that hinders godly union and concord be driven far from it.

Make it the center of refreshing and holy influence. Give wisdom for life and discretion in the guidance of activities in this home.

Let Your work be seen in this family.

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us. Amen.

(If time and circumstances permit, someone may sing "Bless This House".)

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace. Amen.

(Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

DEDICATION OF A HOME

(There is a growing custom among Christian people to dedicate their home. This ritual may be used for such a service. Also it is intended as the form for the dedication of a new house or parsonage. Copies of the responsive service should be placed in the hands of the family members in order that all family members may participate in the responsive reading.)

(The service may be opened with an instrumental prelude and a suitable hymn. The service may then be continued as follows:)

SCRIPTURE

Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

(Deuteronomy 6:4-9 NIV)

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her.

(Luke 10:38-42 NIV)

DECLARATION BY THE MINISTER

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Peace be to this house. Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain. Home was the first institution created by God for His children. Before the state, the school, or the Church was established, the home had come into being.

It was the cradle of religion, of education, of government and of civilization. We have come to invoke the divine blessing upon this home, that its ties of love may be strong and beautiful through the blessing and inspiration of the heavenly Father.

(Let all present join in singing the Doxology.)

PRAYER

(The Minister shall offer a prayer, closing with the following verse:)

O God whose gracious presence blessed the home at Bethany, this shelter from the world's unrest, this home made ready for its Guest, we dedicated it to You. We build an altar here, and pray that You will show Your face, Dear Lord, if You will come to stay, this home we consecrate today will be a holy place. Amen

RESPONSIVE SERVICE BY THE FAMILY

(Let the husband and wife and children who are to occupy this home stand and read these dedicatory lines as indicated, lighting a candle just before the reading begins.)

Husband: To You, O God, who dwells with the humble, shields them with the wings of Your protection, guides them with Your Spirit, and maintains their lot;

Family: We dedicate this home and light the candle of devotion.

Wife: As a house of friendship where others may come for fellowship, neighborliness, and sociability, and to share their thoughts, needs, burdens, and aspirations, and be enabled to go forth strengthened, in body, mind and spirit;

Family: We dedicate this home and light the candle of friendship.

Husband: To beauty in art and literature, where pictures and books shall be friends, and music and song the language of comfort and inspiration;

Family: We dedicate this home and light the candle of beauty.

Wife: To the Great Guest, Jesus Christ our Lord, Who broke bread with those who loved Him, and Who brought the light of heaven and the peace of God to people like ourselves;

Family: We dedicate this home and light the candle of service and hospitality.

PRAYER

O God, our heavenly Father, giver of life, we pray You make this home a place of light and love. Grant that all that is pure, tender and true may grow up under its shelter. Let all that hinders godly union and concord be driven far from it. Make it the center of refreshing and holy influence. Give wisdom for life and discretion in the guidance of the activities in this home.

Let Your work be seen by Your servants, and Your glorious power to their children.

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the works of our hands.

(If time and circumstance permit, someone may sing "Bless This House".)

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace. Amen.

(Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

MORTGAGE OR NOTE BURNING

(A mortgage burning service may very properly be a part of the Sunday morning worship service. The Minister, Conference Superintendent or other guest speaker should preach an appropriate sermon. At the place in the service when the mortgage or note is to be burned, the Trustees should be invited to stand at the front of the church.

(Since a legal paper should not be destroyed but preserved in the church's historical records, in lieu of the canceled mortgage, let a facsimile be used in this ceremony.)

RITUAL OF MORTGAGE BURNING

(The President of the Board of Trustees shall say:)

The membership of this church and its friends have shown a deep interest in this house of worship by contributing of their money for the liquidation of the debt.

The last dollar of indebtedness has now been paid. The mortgage has been canceled and lifted. We now present it to you to be burned with appropriate ceremony. We feel that this is a day of victory and achievement and we rejoice in it.

(The officiating Minister shall say:)

From time immemorial the children of God have found it desirable to build houses of worship, some more costly and some more humble than others, where God and His people can meet in Christian fellowship.

We rejoice with you that through your devotion to the church and through your liberality the debt on this church has been paid. We believe your faithfulness, loyalty and generosity are well pleasing to our heavenly Father.

We believe this church is a simple expression of your love to God. With gratitude and thankfulness in our hearts, we give God the praise. This should mark the beginning of larger service for this church in kingdom work.

(The Minister shall light the candle and give it to the President of the Board of Trustees or another designated person who shall ignite the facsimile of the mortgage/note.)

(The Minister shall say:)

Jesus is the light of the world and in His light we see light.

(While the mortgage/note is being consumed the congregation should stand and sing the Doxology. When the fire has died out the Minister shall pronounce the benediction.)

BENEDICTION

Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

(Ephesians 3:20-21 NIV)

INSTALLATION OF LOCAL CHURCH OFFICERS

(The Minister shall announce the names and offices of those who are to be installed. The officers-elect shall present themselves at the front of the church as their names are called.)

ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER

Christian friends, it has pleased this congregation (or other body or group) to elect you to important positions of leadership for the coming year. We have confidence that you will prove yourselves to be workmen that need not to be ashamed. It is a great honor to be chosen to administer and supervise the work of the Church. It is also a grave responsibility. We trust that you will not only appreciate the honor, but that you will so faithfully meet the duties and responsibilities of your offices that the work of the Church may greatly prosper under your administration and supervision.

Hear the Word of God:

Jesus called them together and said, “You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

(Mark 10:42-45 NIV)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.

(Romans 12:1 NIV)

LITANY

Officials: O God, receive our prayers as we present ourselves to You.

Minister: Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Officials: O Holy Spirit, transform us by the renewing of our mind.

Minister: For by the grace given to me I bid every one among you not to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned them.

Officials: O Christ, teach us to walk in true humility of mind and soul that we may more fully experience that measure of faith which God has granted to each of us.

VOWS

(The Minister shall lead the officers-elect in the following vows:)

In order that those who have chosen you may know your mind in this matter, it is proper that you avow your faith and purpose by answering the following:

1. Do you believe the Bible to be the Word of God? If so, answer: I do.
2. Do you believe Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, and do you accept Him as the Lord of your life, the final authority in all matters of faith and practice? If so, answer: I do.
3. Will you endeavor through the grace of God to frame and fashion your life so that your daily walk and conversation shall be such as are worthy of the place you occupy? If so, answer: I will.
4. Will you faithfully execute the office to which you have been called, in accordance with the Word of God and The Discipline of The Evangelical Church? If so, answer: I will.

5. Will you be faithful to attend the services of the church and thereby set an example to promote growth and Christian unity? If so, answer: I will.

RESPONSIVE READING OF SCRIPTURE

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function. So in Christ, we who are many form one body, and each belongs to all the others.

We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;

If it is encouraging, let him encourage;

If it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously;

If it is in leadership, let him govern diligently;

If it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.

Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.

So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

Each one should be careful how he builds. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me His prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.

Who has saved us and called us to a holy life – not because of anything we have done but because of His own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time.

CHARGE TO OFFICERS AND CONGREGATION BY THE MINISTER

I hereby charge you to enter your duties of office with sincere supplication for strength that you fail not; with supreme devotion that you may be true to that end.

I charge this congregation, that as Aaron and Hur upheld the hands of Moses, so you support and strengthen these officers with your cooperation and earnest prayer.

INSTALLATION OF LOCAL CHURCH OFFICERS

By the authority vested in me as a Minister of The Evangelical Church, I do now install you each in his office, according to the laws, rules and regulations of this church (or organization) and in the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

PRAYER

And now, O Christ, as the Head of the Church we commend these servants to You and to Your direction. Give to them a faithful and willing spirit, with humility, with zeal, and with perseverance; with longsuffering and patience; that they through Your grace may be enabled to guide and direct Your church to the salvation of sinners and to the edification of believers in the most holy faith. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace. Amen.

(Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

INSTALLATION OF A CONFERENCE SUPERINTENDENT

(The elected Elder shall be presented by the Conference Secretary to the Conference Chair, the Conference Secretary saying:)

Mr. Chair, we present unto you this Elder, chosen to be installed as Superintendent of the Conference of The Evangelical Church.

ADDRESS BY THE CHAIR

It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up."

(Ephesians 4:11, 12 NIV)

Therefore, the Church has included in her government the office of Conference Superintendent, to whom is committed the supervision of the churches and the administration of the work of the Annual Conference. To this important office you have been called of the Spirit of God and the voice of your brethren.

SCRIPTURE

If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

Who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death – even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name,

that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed – not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence – continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose. Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life – in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing.

(Philippians 2:1-16 NIV)

Therefore, since through God’s mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart. Rather, we have renounced secret and shameful ways; we do not use deception, nor do we distort the word of God. On the contrary, by setting forth the truth plainly we commend ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus’ sake. For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

(2 Corinthians 4:1-7 NIV)

EXAMINATION BY THE CHAIR

(The Chair shall ask the following:)

1. Will you faithfully give yourself to the study of the Holy Scriptures, to the ministry of intercession, and to the exercise of the means of grace for the edifying of your soul? If so, answer: I will.

2. Will you seek to pattern your life according to the will of God, and show yourself in all things an example of good works unto others, to the honor and glory of God? If so answer: I will by the grace of God.
3. In accepting the office of Superintendent of the Conference, do you promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof as set forth in The Discipline of The Evangelical Church? If so, answer: I do, the Lord being my helper.
4. In the exercise of your office and in the promotion of the work of the Church, will you deal justly and kindly with your brethren of the ministry and the laity, and will you be diligent in fostering the unity, peace, purity and program of the Church? If so, answer: I solemnly promise to do so.
5. Do you, the members of this Annual Conference, acknowledge and receive this Elder as Conference Superintendent, and do you promise to encourage and support him in the work of his office, according to the Word of God and The Discipline of The Evangelical Church? If so, let the Conference answer: We do.

PRAYER

Set apart, O Lord, Your servant to the work that you have called him by the voice of this people. Endue him with heavenly wisdom. Grant him Your grace that he may be a good minister, full of the Holy Spirit; and of faith, administering the work in the fear of God. Give him that favor and influence with the people which come from following You. So fill him with Your Spirit that he may lead this Annual Conference in a greater service in the building of the Church, and the salvation of all people to Your glory. Enable him to be faithful in all things, so that when the Chief Shepherd shall be manifested, he may receive the crown of glory that does not fade away. Amen.

INSTALLATION

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, and by the authority vested in me by this church, I hereby install you as the Superintendent of the (Name) Conference. Amen.

INSTALLATION OF A MINISTER

(The following ritual is to be used when desired and convenient in the local church under the supervision of the Conference Superintendent or his designate.)

INVOCATION AND SCRIPTURE

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

(The Conference Superintendent or someone designated by him shall read 1 Peter 5:1-4 and John 21:15-17.)

Beloved in the Lord, in the name of God and in the presence of this congregation we shall now install as Minister of this church and Pastor of this congregation, our brother in Christ, ...(name)...

THE CHARGE TO THE MINISTER

Beloved brother in Christ: the Great Shepherd of the Church has called you to the office of the Christian Ministry. Now the ... Conference has assigned you to the ministerial leadership and pastorate of this church. I therefore ask you in the presence of God and this congregation:

1. Are you willing and ready to take upon yourself the holy office as the Minister of this church? Will you, furthermore, faithfully discharge the duties of Minister in accordance with the Word of God? Answer: I am willing and ready, with the help of God to discharge the duties of ministry in this church.
2. Do you promise, to the best of your ability, to preach the Word of God, to administer the holy sacraments, to visit the sick, to counsel the troubled, to comfort the sorrowing, to administer the program of the Conference and of the Church, to teach the gospel both by precept and word? Answer: I do so promise, the Lord being my helper.

THE CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION

Beloved in the Lord, you have heard the solemn promises made by him who has been appointed your Minister and Pastor. Do you now, on your part, receive him as your pastor? Do you further promise, according to the grace that is given to you, to uphold him and your church with your prayers, your presence, your gifts, and your service that his ministry among you might be fruitful to the glory of God?

Answer: We do, the Lord being our helper.

THE INSTALLATION

Upon this mutual assurance and pledge, we do now install you, as the Minister and Pastor of the ...(Local Name)... Evangelical Church, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Lord, who has called you into His service enlighten, strengthen and guide you through His Holy Spirit, that you may serve this congregation as a faithful laborer bringing forth fruit unto life eternal.

THE PRAYER

Blessed be Your name, O God, for the Church of Jesus Christ and the ministry of reconciliation. We ask that You bless this congregation and Pastor, and seal this union into which they have entered, that in all things they may faithfully work together in the building of Your kingdom.

Fill Your servant with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, enrich his ministry with Your love and peace, strengthen his messages with Your power and truth, and preserve his life in purity to be an example unto many. Grant, O Lord, that he may be truly an ambassador, to proclaim the Gospel of redemption.

Visit this congregation with Your love and favor. Prepare the hearts of the old and young to receive and obey Your word. Enlighten the minds of all with the light of Your Gospel. Enable all members of this church to faithful service, willing sacrifice and fervent zeal for Your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(The Lord's Prayer may be prayed, or the Conference Superintendent may pray a benediction.)

INSTALLATION OF A MINISTER (*Alternate Service*)

(The Conference Superintendent presiding, shall call the Minister and his wife to the front of the church for the service of installation.)

INVOCATION AND SCRIPTURE

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

(The Conference Superintendent or someone designated by him shall read 1 Peter 4:1-4 and John 21:15-17.)

THE CHARGE TO THE MINISTER

(Name) , the Great Shepherd of the Church has called you to the office of the Christian Ministry. The Conference of The Evangelical Church has recognized that call, and through her Itinerant Elders has affirmed your call. The Conference Superintendent has been pleased to assign the pastoral responsibilities of the Evangelical Church to you. Today you officially begin a great walk together with the people of God in this congregation.

You will celebrate together... sorrow together... laugh together... weep together... pray together... play together... dream together... and achieve together.

As your Conference Superintendent I therefore charge you before God and this congregation:

Be honest with the use of your time and work as a Minister;

Faithfully give yourself to the study of the Holy Scriptures, the ministry of prayer and the exercise of the means of grace for building yourself in God's love and power;

Pattern your life according to the will of God and show yourself in all things an example of good works to others for the glory of God;

Be fair with your family in giving to them the time and consideration they need and deserve;

Keep all confidences shared with you as a sacred trust;

Use your gifts and training to develop and equip the saints for the work of ministry;

Remain open to constructive criticism and receptive to suggestions intended to strengthen your ministry and the life of your people;

Exercise the necessary discipline to stay mentally, spiritually and physically alert and fit for effective service;

Be careful and honest in the stewardship of money, endeavoring to live within your income and pay your just bills on time;

Guard your integrity with your fellow Ministers, your people, your family, your community and your Conference Superintendent at all times;

If openly rebuked or rebuffed by others, return only genuine love, kindness and consideration;

If praised by others, accept it humbly and give the glory to God;

In all aspects of your ministerial, pastoral and personal ministry be diligent to abide by your commitments, maintain the dignity of the high and holy office of a Christian minister and give careful attention to all the details of your responsibilities.

VOWS OF INSTALLATION

And now that your people may hear of your commitment to the office of a Christian Minister in The Evangelical Church, I ask you these questions:

1. Are you ready and willing to take upon yourself the holy office of Minister and Pastor of this congregation assigned and committed to your care? If so, answer: I am by the grace and help of God.
2. To the best of your ability will you faithfully preach the Word of God, visit the sick, counsel the troubled, comfort the sorrowing, administer the programs of the Annual Conference and The Evangelical Church according to the Holy Scriptures and The Discipline of The Evangelical Church? If so, answer: I will, the Lord being my helper.
3. To the best of your ability will you give leadership to this congregation not as lording over them, but as a gentle shepherd, guarding them against all enemies of the soul and guiding them in building up the body of Christ

and in new conquests of kingdom building? If so, answer:
As God is my helper, I will do so.

4. Will you be diligent in performing the ministerial responsibilities attendant to the office of Minister as stated in The Discipline of The Evangelical Church? If so, answer: I will, the Lord being my helper.

THE CHARGE TO THE CONGREGATION

Beloved in the Lord: you have heard the solemn promises made by him to whom the leadership of this church has been assigned.

Do you now receive him in this high and holy office of dignity and divine calling? Do you promise according to the grace of God given to you to uphold him, his family and your church with your prayer, your presence, your tithes and offerings, and your service that this ministry might be fruitful to the glory of God?

If so, answer: We do, the Lord being our helper.

THE INSTALLATION

(The Conference Superintendent shall ask the Minister and his wife to kneel at the altar of the church. He may invite the Lay Leader and other local church officials to come and kneel behind the Minister and his wife, and he shall lay his hands on the heads of the Minister and his wife, saying the following:)

Upon this mutual assurance and commitment, as the Superintendent of the ... Conference of The Evangelical Church, I do now install you, ... (Name)..., as the Minister and Pastor of the ... (Name) ... Evangelical Church, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Lord, Who has called you into His service, enlighten, strengthen and guide you through His Holy Spirit, that you may serve this congregation as a faithful Minister and Pastor.

(The congregation may stand together and sing the hymn "Lead On, O King Eternal or another appropriate hymn.)

BENEDICTION

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace. Amen.

(Numbers 6:24-26 NIV)

COMMISSIONING OF A MISSIONARY

(This recognition shall be given in the missionary's home church whenever feasible.)

(The Minister of the church or another officiating Minister shall call the Missionary [and family if appropriate] to the front of the church.)

THE CALL TO SERVICE

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

(Isaiah 52:7 NIV)

I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to My voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd.

(John 10:16 NIV)

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

(Matthew 28:19-20 NIV)

A LITANY OF GRATITUDE

Leader: Thanks to You O God and Father of us all, for the revelation of Yourself, and for the commission of Your church to proclaim the Gospel of Christ to a needy world;

People: For the early disciples of Christ whom He sent forth to proclaim the coming of the kingdom;

Leader: For the missionaries, known and unknown, who first brought the Gospel to our forefathers;

People: For the faithful who, in ages of darkness, kept their lamps burning and watched for the coming of the Lord;

Leader: For all who have labored to keep the Church devoted to her great task of evangelizing the world;

People: For those who have gone to the ends of the earth with the joyful news, and have sought out the dark places to bring light to them that dwell in darkness;

Leader: For the innumerable company who now praise Your name, out of every kindred and nation and tongue;

People: For this Your servant (these Your servants) who is (are) willing to go forth in obedience to Your call to follow You wherever You may lead; to face the world's greatest need.

All: Thanks and praise to You, O God. Amen.

RECOGNITION OF COMMITMENT

(To the missionary:)

We rejoice with you that in the good providence of God, a door of usefulness has been opened for you in the service of the Church of Christ. You are accorded unusual privileges and priceless opportunities for service. Like our Master, you have been set apart for the ministry of (teaching) (preaching) (healing). Such service is one which confers a great privilege, but also lays upon you a solemn responsibility.

What you have done alone with God in consecrating your life to this service, we now recognize publicly in the presence of this congregation.

INVITATION TO SHARE

To the congregation: Now, I encourage you who have witnessed this solemn service to remember this Missionary in your prayers as he/she goes forth to his/her labors; that he/she may reach his/her field of service in safety and as God's messenger and our representative he/she may experience in his/her life the rich blessings of God. I charge you to do your part in giving your

resources of talent and means to promote the cause of missions, that the earth may be filled with the knowledge of God and that the kingdom of the world may become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Spirit of the living God, descend upon this Missionary of the Cross. Impart to him/her grace for every trial and strength for every service. Be a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. And let Your blessing, O Eternal God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with him/her now and evermore. Amen.

(If this Recognition comes at the close of a service of worship the service may be closed with an appropriate hymn and the benediction.)

COMMISSIONING TO SPECIAL MINISTRIES

(The use of the Commissioning of a Missionary is recommended for adaptation and use in commissioning persons to special ministries who have been approved by the Annual Conference. Any person thus commissioned shall be given a Certificate of Commission, identifying the area of ministry to which The Evangelical Church has commissioned that person.)

RETIREMENT OF AN ELDER

(This service should be conducted as a part of the Annual Conference Session under the leadership of the Chair of the Annual Conference Session.)

CALL TO WORSHIP

In the name of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, let us enter into this service of the retirement of an Elder from active work in the ministry of the Church.

PRAYER OF INVOCATION

Almighty God, Giver of all good things, who by Your Holy Spirit has appointed ministers in Your church, graciously be near us in this service and bless us. Unite us in one holy communion with Your prophets and saints of old who trusted in You and were not ashamed; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

PRESENTATION OF THE ELDER

(The Conference Secretary will present the Elder who is retiring from active service, using the following words:)

Esteemed Chair, the ...(name of Conference)... Conference of The Evangelical Church in this annual session desires formally to recognize the completion of the active service of this Minister. As Secretary of the ...(name of Annual Conference)... , I, therefore present him for this service of recognition in appreciation of his ministry in the Church.

(The Conference Secretary will then call the name of the one to be retired, who shall rise and present himself before the Chair. It may be advisable to have the retiring Elder seated near the front as the service continues.)

SCRIPTURE

Grace and peace to you from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father – to Him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.

(Revelation 1:4-6 NIV)

STATEMENT OF ACHIEVEMENT

(The Conference Superintendent, or someone appointed by the Chair, shall prepare and present a brief statement of the ministerial activities of the Elder to be retired. This statement shall include an account of the time of the grant of license, the ordination and the fields served during his years of service. The statement may end with the following Scripture:)

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know Him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

(1 John 3:1-3 NIV)

ADDRESS BY THE CHAIR

The record of your active ministry is written. It is written in the annals of your Conference but also in the records of God. Your church is deeply grateful for your ministry and for the care which you have exercised in being faithful to your vows of ordination. May the memory of those years of sacrificial service and fruitful labor be blessed and hallowed. And now as you yield your official responsibilities as an active Minister and Pastor in the Church, be assured that the years that are yet to be may be filled with good works and become the crown of all your ministry, bringing glory and honor to you and to the Church.

The congregation of which you will be a member will look to you for spiritual guidance and godly example. Your brothers in the ministry will annually listen for your answer to the roll call of the Conference, and will continue to seek and respect your counsel. May you ever keep before you the glow of the vision which was yours, when first you answered the call to the ministry; that you may ever be able to say, with the apostle of old, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision."

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

O God, our heavenly Father, we thank You that in Your infinite love, You have given Your Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior and Lord. We thank You that having made perfect our redemption by His death, resurrection and ascension into heaven, He gave gifts unto men, and sent forth unto all the world apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, by whose labor and ministry there have been gathered a great flock in His holy Name. We thank You, O God, for this Your servant who years ago answered Your call and was ordained into the Christian Ministry, appointed for the salvation of all people.

We bless You for his fruitful life of untiring service, for his constant devotion to the duties of his calling, and for his sacrificial spirit throughout the years of his active ministry. Grant to him now Your peace in abiding love.

When at last his days are numbered, through Your everlasting mercy, gather him, and ultimately all of us, into the fullness of life evermore; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BENEDICTION

To Him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before His glorious presence without fault and with great joy – to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore. Amen

(Jude 24-25 NIV)