

Commissioning for Church Related Community Workers

A meeting of the District Council shall be constituted. The Moderator of the Synod (or a deputy) shall be invited by the Council to preside. The Commissioning shall normally be held in the church-in-community where the church related community worker is to serve. It should be adapted to local circumstances, with opportunities for participation by those who will work with the church related community worker. If desired the Lord's Supper may be celebrated after the prayers of intercession.

1. Scripture Sentences
2. Hymn or Song
3. Prayer of Approach
4. Prayer of Confession
5. Statement
6. Readings from Scripture
7. Sermon
8. Hymn or Song
9. Presentation of the Candidate
10. Statement by the Church-in-Community
11. Statement by the Candidate
12. Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church (Schedule D)
13. Affirmations (Schedule F)
14. Promises
15. Hymn of the Holy Spirit
16. Commissioning Prayer
17. Declaration of Commissioning and Induction
18. Signing of the CRCW Covenant
19. Welcome
20. Giving of Gifts
21. Prayers of Intercession
22. Prayer of Commitment
23. Hymn or Song
24. Dismissal and Blessing

The Preparation

I. Scripture Sentences

Come, let us sing to the LORD;

**let us make a joyful noise
to the rock of our salvation!**

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;

**let us make a joyful noise to him
with songs of praise.**

Psalm 95:1-2

For the LORD is good; his steadfast love endures for ever,

and his faithfulness to all generations.

Psalm 100:5

or

I will rejoice in Jerusalem and delight in my people;

**no more shall the sound of weeping be heard
or the cry of distress.**

They shall not labour in vain, or bear children for calamity.

**Before they call I will answer,
while they are yet speaking I will hear.**

Isaiah 65:19,23a,24

or

Thus says the LORD; I will return to Zion,
and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem;

**old men and old women shall again sit
in the streets of Jerusalem.**

**And the streets of the city shall be full of boys
and girls playing.**

Zechariah 8:3a,4a,5

or

I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem,

coming down out of heaven from God.

And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

See, the home of God is among mortals.

He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples,

and God himself will be with them.

Revelation 21:2a,3

2. Hymn or Song

3. Prayer of Approach

Loving God,
whose love we live to serve,
so that all the world may see the wonder of it,
take hold of us again as we worship here,
and give us the mind of Christ,
so that we may rediscover your presence
in the community around us,
and recognise your Spirit at work
in every act of human kindness,
in every plea for justice,
in every call to service
and in every challenge to our complacency.
Take hold of us again,
fill us with love for each other
and our neighbours,
and by our faithfulness,
let your justice, joy and peace
extend to more and more,
so that the thanks and praise we offer now
may increase,
to your glory and our delight,
now and for evermore.

Amen.

4. Prayer of Confession

Faithful God,
you called your Church into being
to proclaim your integrity to the world,
and to live in the truth of it.

**Forgive our faithlessness,
and make our witness true.**

Loving God,
you called your Church into being
to assure the world of your unfailing love
and to live in the power of it.

**Forgive our lovelessness,
and give us grace to love our neighbours
as you, in Christ, have loved us.**

God of justice,
you called your Church into being
to serve your cause,
and to challenge prejudice and oppression.

**Forgive our prejudice,
and our hardness of heart;
fill us with compassion
and make us merciful.**

God of peace,
you called your Church into being
to teach the world the things that make for peace.

**Forgive our enmity and bitterness,
make us truly your daughters and sons
and makers of peace,
with Jesus Christ our Lord.**

The saying is sure
and worthy of full acceptance:
**that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.
Thanks be to God
who gives us the victory
through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Amen.

5. Statement

We are met today as the XY District/Area Council
of the United Reformed Church,
with the members of church-in-community,
representatives of and other friends.

All Christians are called to the duty and delight
of continuing the ministry of Christ
in the Church and for the world.

Some are called to the ministry of church related community work, challenging the community while caring and praying for it, so the Church can proclaim the love and mercy of God and can work with others for peace and justice.

N was accepted by the United Reformed Church as a candidate for this ministry has been prepared for commissioning by *college/course*, commended for commissioning by *sending Synod* and has been called to serve here by decision of *CRCW Covenant partners*.

or

N has served as a church related community worker in AB for the past years and has been called to serve here by decision of *CRCW Covenant partners*.

The Ministry of the Word

6. Readings from Scripture

The following readings are appropriate:

Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures):
Deuteronomy 15:1-11; Psalm 15; Isaiah 58:1-12;
Jeremiah 31:7-14; Zechariah 8:1-8

New Testament:
Matthew 5:1-16; Matthew 7:7-20; Matthew 19:16-30;
Mark 4:21-32; Luke 1:46-55; Luke 6:20-31; Luke 14:7-14;
John 4:5-15,21-30,39-42; Philippians 2:1-11; Revelation 21:1-7.

7. Sermon

8. Hymn or Song

Commissioning and Induction

9. Presentation of the Candidate

An appropriate person may present the candidate to the presiding minister in these or similar words:

Moderator, I present N to you, for commissioning and induction.

10. Statement by the Church-in-Community

In the case of an ecumenical appointment this statement should include contributions from ecumenical partners.

11. Statement by the Candidate

The candidate makes a brief statement about his/her call to this particular ministry. In the case of a first commissioning this should include his/her call to the ministry of church related community work.

12. Statement concerning the Nature, Faith and Order of the United Reformed Church

This Statement (Basis of Union, Schedule D) is read in one of the approved forms.

13. Affirmations

All stand as the presiding minister asks the church related community worker to affirm his/her faith.

1. N, will you confess anew your faith?

I confess anew my faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

I believe that the Word of God in the Old and New Testaments, discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the supreme authority for the faith and conduct of all God's people.

**I believe that Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary,
lived our common life on earth, died upon the cross,
and who was raised from the dead
and reigns for evermore,
is the gift of God's very self to the world.
I believe that through him God's love,
justice and mercy are revealed
and forgiveness, reconciliation and eternal life
are offered to all people.
And by the grace of God
I promise to proclaim this gospel faithfully.
I believe that the Church is the people
gathered by God's love
to proclaim the reconciliation of the world to God
through Jesus Christ.**

2. What leads you to this ministry?

**So far as I know my own heart,
I believe that zeal for the glory of God,
love for the Lord Jesus Christ,
obedience to the Holy Spirit
and a desire for the salvation of the world,
are the chief motives
which lead me to enter this ministry.
Relying on the strength of Christ,
I promise to live a holy life,
and to maintain the truth of the gospel,
whatever trouble or persecution may arise.**

3. Will you faithfully fulfil the duties of your charge?

**By the grace of God, I promise to care for,
to challenge and to pray for the community,
to discern with others God's will
for the wellbeing of the community.
I promise to take my part in the councils of the Church
and to endeavour to enable the Church
to live out its calling
to proclaim the love and mercy of God
through working with others
in both Church and community
for peace and justice in the world.**

**As a church related community worker
of the United Reformed Church
I promise to seek its well-being, purity, and peace,
to cherish love towards all other churches,
and always to build up
the one holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I undertake to exercise my ministry
in accordance with the Statement
concerning the Nature, Faith and Order
of the United Reformed Church.
All these things I profess and promise
in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

or the affirmations may be made in this way:

1. N, do you confess anew your faith in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit?
I do.
2. Do you believe that the Word of God
in the Old and New Testaments,
discerned under the guidance of the Holy Spirit,
is the supreme authority
for the faith and conduct of all God's people?
I do.
3. Do you believe that Jesus Christ, who was born of Mary,
lived our common life on earth, died upon the cross,
and who was raised from the dead and reigns for evermore,
is the gift of God's very self to the world?
Do you believe that through him
God's love, justice and mercy are revealed
and forgiveness, reconciliation and eternal life
are offered to all people?
And will you faithfully proclaim this gospel?
**By the grace of God this I believe
and this I will proclaim.**
4. Do you believe that the Church
is the people gathered by God's love
to proclaim the reconciliation of the world to God
through Jesus Christ?
I do.

5. Are zeal for the glory of God,
love for the Lord Jesus Christ,
obedience to the Holy Spirit
and a desire for the salvation of the world,
so far as you know your own heart,
the chief motives which lead you to enter this ministry?
They are.
6. Do you promise to live a holy life,
and to maintain the truth of the gospel,
whatever trouble or persecution may arise?
Relying on the strength of Christ, I do.
7. Do you promise to care for, to challenge
and to pray for the community,
to discern with others God's will
for the wellbeing of the community?
Do you promise to take your part
in the councils of the Church
and to enable the Church to live out its calling
to proclaim the love and mercy of God
through working with others in both Church and community
for peace and justice in the world?
By the grace of God, I do.
8. Do you promise as a church related community worker
in the United Reformed Church
to seek its well-being, purity and peace,
to cherish love towards all other churches,
and to endeavour always to build up
the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church?
By the grace of God, I do.

Will you undertake to exercise your ministry
in accordance with the Statement
concerning the Nature, Faith and Order
of the United Reformed Church?

**I will, and all these things I profess and promise
in the power of the Holy Spirit.**

14. Promises

The presiding minister asks members of the church-in-community and representatives of the District/Area Council to respond to the following questions:

Do you confess again your faith in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit?

We do.

Do you receive N as from God, to serve among you here and with you in the world?

We do.

Do you promise to pray for each other and for N; and do you promise to share with *him/her* in seeking and doing the will of God, to give *him/her* encouragement, consideration and support, so that you grow together in faith, hope and love?

We do.

15. Hymn of the Holy Spirit

16. Commissioning Prayer

The congregation remains standing for the commissioning prayer.

Eternal God, you have called us into the Church to proclaim the gospel and make it effective in the world; and, in your Holy Spirit, we receive all the gifts we need.

We give thanks, today, because you have given N the necessary gifts to challenge and encourage us in our work within the community where we live. As we receive *him/her* in the name of Jesus Christ, and as we commission *him/her* to your service here, strengthen and encourage *him/her* with the assurance of your Holy Spirit's constant presence, so that *he/she* may face the future, with all its responsibilities, calmly and confidently but also with excitement and joy.

Give *him/her* ever deeper understanding
of your ways with the world,
keep *him/her* compassionate and courageous
in all *his/her* dealings with other people,
so that *he/she* and they may discover
their infinite value as your daughters and sons.
Through *his/her* ministry
may all of us be more and more challenged
and inspired to respond to human need;
that our work and prayer might help all to find their voice
and the strength to build a better community,
at one with itself,
in the peace and joy of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

17. Declaration of Commissioning and Induction

The presiding minister says:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and representing the XY District/Area Council
of the United Reformed Church,
I declare N to be commissioned and inducted
to the ministry of church related community worker
to work with church-in-community
and XY District/Area Council:

18. Signing of the CRCW Covenant

*Five copies of the church related community work covenant
are signed by the church related community worker and
representatives of the church-in-community, the CRCW
programme sub-committee, the District/Area Council and
the Synod.*

19. Welcome

The right hand of fellowship is given by the presiding minister and others duly appointed, who may include the church-in-community, the District/Area Council and the General Assembly as well as ecumenical, civic and community representatives.

20. Giving of Gifts

The church related community worker may be presented with gifts.

21. Prayers of Intercession

These may be offered by someone from the church-in-community and end with the Lord's Prayer(if not used earlier).

22. Prayer of Commitment

Help us, God, to trust you
and to find your purpose
in everything that happens to us.
Be there with us in every experience,
speak to us through other people,
and give us what it takes
to express your love for the world
in all our words and works.

Take us where you want us to go,
renewing our faith and hope,
forgiving our sin,
perfecting our praise
and filling us with confidence,
so that your name may be glorified in us
as it has been already
and will be for ever
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

23. Hymn or Song

24. Dismissal and Blessing

Go to the world again in confidence;
play your part in God's creation
and never lose heart.

Put your faith in the risen Christ,
who will match his stride to yours
until your journey's end.

And the blessing of the Eternal God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, (*Creator, Saviour and Holy Spirit*)
be with you all.

Amen.

