

LITURGY FOR THE RECOGNITION OF THE AUTHORISATION BY A PRESBYTERY FOR A LAY PERSON TO PRESIDE AT THE SACRAMENTS

NOTES

1. In the prior process of consultation with the congregation(s) and/or agencies of the church involved, the following matters need to be addressed:
 - (i) The intention of the church that the sacraments will normally be conducted by an ordained minister;
 - (ii) the nature of the ministry to be exercised;
 - (iii) the scope of the training and preparation undertaken;
 - (iv) any limitations or conditions imposed by the Presbytery in regard to the ministry;
 - (v) the various contexts in which the ministry will be exercised and
 - (vi) the period of time for which the authorisation is being given.
2. This Act of Recognition will be conducted by the Chairperson of the Presbytery or a person appointed by the Presbytery for this purpose.
It forms part of the regular Sunday service of the congregation. If more than one congregation is involved it would be appropriate, where possible, to hold a combined service.
3. Normally this Act of Recognition follows the Preaching of the Word and the Affirmation of Faith. Holy Communion may be celebrated by the Chairperson of the Presbytery or his/her appointee.
4. Where permission is being given to preside in contexts other than a congregation, the liturgy can be amended accordingly.

The act of recognition

There are diverse gifts;
but it is the same Spirit who gives them.

There are different ways of serving God:
but it is the same Lord who is served.

God works through people in different ways:
**but it is the same God
whose purpose is achieved through them all.**

Each one of us is given a gift by the Spirit:
and there is no gift without its corresponding service.

There is one ministry of Christ:
and in this ministry we all share.

Together we are the body of Christ:
and individually members of it.

*Based on I Corinthians 12:4ff
and Basis of Union, para. 13*

The Chairperson of Presbytery says:

The Basis of Union reminds us that the "Uniting Church acknowledges that Christ has commanded his Church to proclaim the Gospel both in words and in the two visible acts of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christ himself acts in and through everything that the Church does in obedience to his commandment."
Basis of Union, para. 6

Where permission has been given to preside at both sacraments the Chairperson says:

Given that an ordained minister is not available on a regular basis to conduct the sacraments, the Presbytery of NNN, in consultation with this congregation (or, the congregations of), has determined that special arrangements need to be made in order to ensure that the sacraments can be properly celebrated. To that end the Presbytery has resolved to authorise NNN to preside at the celebration of the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism within the worship services and wider life and ministry of this congregation (these congregations) for an initial period of 12 months.

Where permission has been given to preside at only one of the sacraments the Chairperson says:

Given that an ordained minister is not available on a regular basis to conduct the sacraments, the Presbytery of NNN, in consultation with this congregation (the congregations of), has determined that special arrangements need to be made in order to ensure that the sacraments can be properly celebrated. To that end the Presbytery has resolved to authorise NNN to preside at the celebration of the sacrament of.....within the worship services and wider life and ministry of this congregation (these congregations) for an initial period of 12 months.

NNN, do you confess anew Jesus Christ as Lord?

I do.

Do you believe that you are called by God through the Church to this ministry?

I do.

Do you promise to exercise your ministry under the supervision and discipline of the Presbytery?

I do.

We acknowledge, with gratitude, NNN's willingness to undertake this ministry and now pray for God's blessing on him/her and for the enabling power of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray:

Gracious God, we thank you that you never cease to call women and men to serve you in and through the life of your church and that for this purpose you provide them with all the gifts of the Spirit they need.

Today we thank you especially for NNN, who has answered your call and is now authorized by the Presbytery of.....to preside at the celebration of the sacraments (the sacrament of.....) within this congregation (or, within the congregations of N, N and N).

By your Spirit enable him/her faithfully and prayerfully to fulfil the responsibilities now entrusted to him/her. Unite him/her in heart and mind with those amongst whom he/she will minister. Bless your church in this place and make it strong in its worship, witness and service, for the sake of Christ, in whose name we pray.

Amen

Blessing (said or sung together):

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you.

**The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you,
and give you peace.**

Approved by the Assembly Standing Committee, July 2013.