

**General Services for Christian Worship
in the United Methodist Tradition
Second Edition, 2016**

**A Basic Resource for Worship Planners
and Worship Leaders**

This publication is based on resources for worship in
The United Methodist Book of Worship and *The United Methodist Hymnal*
and has been prepared by staff of
The General Board of Discipleship of The United Methodist Church
in cooperation with The United Methodist Publishing House.

GENERAL SERVICES FOR CHRISTIAN WORSHIP
IN THE UNITED METHODIST TRADITION:
Second Edition 2016
A BASIC RESOURCE FOR WORSHIP PLANNERS
AND WORSHIP LEADERS

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CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	2
The Basic Pattern of Worship	5
A Development and Description of The Basic Pattern	6
A Guide to Christian Worship Using The Basic Pattern	10
The Baptismal Covenant I: Service of Baptism and Profession of Faith with Those Able to Answer for Themselves	15
The Baptismal Covenant II: Service of Baptism for Children and Others Unable to Answer for Themselves	20
A Service of Christian Marriage	23
A Service of Death and Resurrection	28
A Service of Committal	33
Model Prayers and Resources	35
A Great Thanksgiving for General Use	35
A Great Thanksgiving for a Marriage	37
A Great Thanksgiving for a Service of Death and Resurrection	41
A Great Thanksgiving with Persons Who Are Sick or Homebound	44
The Apostles Creed for Use at Services of the Baptismal Covenant (Baptism, Confirmation, Re-affirmation)	47
Thanksgiving over the Water for Services of the Baptismal Covenant	48

THE BASIC PATTERN OF WORSHIP

This order for proclaiming God's Word and celebrating Holy Communion expresses the biblical, historical, and ecumenical convergence about the shape and contents of Christian worship. It underlies all of the General Services of the Church.

The various options presented demonstrate the flexibility of this pattern.

ENTRANCE

The people gather in the Lord's name.

A font may be made available for the baptized to reaffirm their baptism.

Greetings, prayer, and praise may be expressed in sung, spoken and other expressions.

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

The Scriptures are opened to the people through the reading of lessons, preaching, witnessing, music, or other arts and media. Psalms, anthems, and hymns may be interspersed to support the scriptures and the flow of the service. Responses to God's Word may include confessions of faith, invitation to Christian discipleship, acts of the baptismal covenant, and other acts of commitment or dedication. All services should include prayers of intercession by the people for the church, the world, and one another.

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

The people prepare to offer themselves to God in praise and thanksgiving by confessing their sin, hearing the word of pardon, and sharing the peace of Christ with one another. An offering may be collected. When communion is celebrated, the offering may include the presentation of the gifts of bread and wine.

When communion is celebrated, it is the primary act of thanksgiving. When communion is not celebrated, other substantial acts of thanksgiving are offered in connection with or after the offering.

The actions of Holy Communion are modeled on the actions of Jesus at the Last Supper:

Taking the bread and cup (preparing the table)

Giving thanks over the bread and cup (Great Thanksgiving)

Breaking the bread (after the Great Thanksgiving)

Giving the bread and cup (distribution)

SENDING FORTH

The people are sent into ministry with the Lord's blessing.

A DEVELOPMENT AND DESCRIPTION OF THE BASIC PATTERN OF WORSHIP

The following commentary explains the various parts of the service and offers additional suggestions for using the Basic Pattern of Worship.

Local and cultural traditions are encouraged and may be incorporated into the service at the discretion of the pastor. Dance, drama, music and other arts may deepen the meaning and expression of particular moments of worship, proclaim the Word of God, and express the congregation's response.

ENTRANCE

GATHERING—The people assemble in the worship space and prepare themselves, individually and collectively, for worship. Silence, music, or song may be part of this time.

GREETING—The pastor or other leader greets the congregation in the name of Jesus Christ and the congregation greets the leader. The greeting should be brief, not call attention to itself, and help move the congregation into the actions that follow.

[OPENING PRAYER] . If included, this may be a brief collect that encapsulates the scriptural theme for the day.

ACTS OF PRAISE—May include one or more psalms, prayers, congregational songs or other artistic expressions that actively engage the whole congregation.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD AND RESPONSE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION—A leader or all of the people pray for the Holy Spirit to open the church's mind and heart to hear what God is saying to them as the scriptures are read and the Word is proclaimed through the sermon or message.

READINGS OF SCRIPTURE—The Revised Common Lectionary is the recommended source for each Sunday's readings. Sermon series, especially when based on the lectionary texts, are also commended. Psalms or songs may follow each reading

SERMON

RESPONSE(S) TO THE WORD—After hearing and proclaiming God's Word, the pastor and other worship leaders guide the congregation in response to that Word. For a list of possible responses, see page 12.

PRAYERS WITH THE WORLD, THE WORLDWIDE AND LOCAL CHURCH, THE EARTH AND PEOPLE IN NEED —A leader guides the congregation in praying with and for the world,

the local and worldwide church of all Christian denominations, the earth and people who are in need. This may be done in a variety of ways. People may be invited to pray aloud or silently, voicing individual concerns the leader gathers into a corporate prayer. Or a spoken or sung refrain may be a corporate response to the naming of each general petition or individual concern. The prayers may be concluded with an appropriate collect, or with the Lord's Prayer in unison.

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

THE INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE/THANKSGIVING—The pastor or deacon invites all present to prepare to offer their thanksgiving (whether the Great Thanksgiving or other acts of thanksgiving) by calling all to confess their sin and seek to be at peace with one another.

THE CONFESSION OF SIN AND PARDON—A pastor, deacon or lay worship leader leads the congregation in a prayer of corporate confession of sin, followed by silence for individual confession. The pastor announces God's forgiveness in response to our confession.

THE PEACE—Reconciled with God, we now seek and extend reconciliation and blessing to one another. The pastor announces the peace of God to the people and all offer God's peace to one another in words and gestures.

OFFERING—Here the people offer themselves to God in union with Christ's offering for the world. This self-offering may be expressed through music or dance that accompanies bringing the elements for the Holy Communion, food or other resources for people who are poor or suffering, and money and other gifts to support the work of the church. After all gifts are collected, they may be brought forward and placed on a table near the Lord's table.

TAKING THE BREAD AND CUP—The pastor or deacon takes the bread and cup, offered from the gifts of the people, places them on the table, and prepares the table for the Great Thanksgiving. If these gifts are already in place, the pastor or deacon lifts them before the congregation. This follows the Old Testament model of the presentation of sacrifices by those offering them. (See Leviticus 1:4).

BLESSING OUR TRIUNE GOD: THE GREAT THANKSGIVING AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

The authorized presider (elder, commissioned minister preparing to become an elder, or appointed local pastor) and congregation call each other to offer themselves to God.

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Pastor: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Pastor: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The authorized presider leads the congregation in giving thanks to God for God's mighty acts of salvation in Jesus Christ, including Jesus taking the bread and cup and

commanding us to “Do this in remembrance of me.” The people make a memorial acclamation, and the presider leads the people in asking God to pour out the Holy Spirit upon on the bread and cup and on the congregation. The prayer concludes with praise to the Holy Trinity, and all join in the Great Amen, marking the completion of our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and the assent to and participation by the whole gathered people in the prayer led by the authorized presider. All may pray the Lord’s Prayer together if it does not occur earlier in the service.

(For an example of the ‘Great Thanksgiving’, see page 35 below.)

BREAKING THE BREAD—The Great Thanksgiving completed, the authorized presider breaks the bread and lifts the cup in silence or with appropriate words to prepare the elements for distribution.

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP—The authorized presider, assisted by a deacon and/or by others, gives the bread and cup to the people using simple words such as “The body of Christ given for you” with the bread and “The blood of Christ poured out for you” with the cup.

THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION---The presider leads the people in a prayer of thanksgiving that leads to the Sending Forth.

It is strongly recommended that some of the communion bread and drink be taken to persons in the congregation who could not be present for the celebration of Holy Communion. This should happen as soon as possible after the conclusion of the service. In this way the Lord’s Table is extended. Laypersons as well as clergy may take these elements shared in the congregation to persons unwillingly absent. A sample service is provided on page 44.

Or

ACT OF THANKSGIVING

When Holy Communion cannot be celebrated, the pastor or other leader leads the congregation in substantial acts of thanksgiving for the God’s saving actions in creation, redemption, and in the lives of the congregation. This may include prayers or litanies of thanksgiving, one or more congregational songs giving thanks to God, and musical or other artistic expressions. Thanksgiving offered by any means may be modeled on the pattern of the Great Thanksgiving. However it is offered, thanksgiving should be comprehensive, covering personal, local, global, historical and ongoing acts of the Triune God in creation, redemption, and the promised culmination of all things in Jesus Christ.

SENDING FORTH

CONGREGATIONAL ACTS CONFIRMING INTENTIONS OF THE PEOPLE TO SEEK AND SERVE CHRIST IN THE WORLD-- May include prayers, congregational song or other responses.

BLESSING AND SENDING—The authorized presider blesses the congregation in the name of the Holy Trinity. A deacon, or in the absence of a deacon, an assisting lay leader sends the congregation forth to love God and serve their neighbors.

GOING FORTH—Dance, singing, instrumental music and talking are all appropriate as the people leave.

A GUIDE TO CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

USING THE BASIC PATTERN

The following order is suggested when the congregation gathers for Christian worship on Sunday or other times for the principal service of worship. It shows the variety that is possible within the basic pattern of worship.

*It is intended as a guide for those who plan worship, **not** an order that must be followed verbatim by the congregation. The congregation may be guided through the service by announcement, bulletin, and/or digital projection.*

Local and cultural traditions are encouraged and may be incorporated into the service at the discretion of the pastor. Dance, instrumental music and various forms of art may be used to proclaim the Word of God and to express the congregation's response.

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

The people come together in the Lord's name.

While they are gathering, one or more of the following may take place:

- Informal greetings, conversation, and fellowship
- Announcements and welcoming
- Rehearsal of congregational music and other acts of worship
- Informal prayer, singing, testimony
- Quiet meditation and private prayer
- Instrumental or vocal music

GREETING

Facing the congregation, the leader greets them in the Lord's name.

Elements of the greeting may include:

- Scripture sentences or responsive acts between leader and congregation to declare the Lord is present and empowers our worship
- Pouring of water at the font to recall our common life in the baptismal covenant
- A song or hymn of greeting

ACTS OF PRAISE

The people praise God together.

One or more of the following may be spoken or sung:

- A song or hymn of praise.
- Instrumental offering accompanying or interspersed within a congregational act of praise.
- Prayer of the day, such as a collect

Prayer of confession and act of pardon, especially in penitential seasons such as Lent. If an act of confession and pardon is offered here, it is not repeated later in the service.

Litany with repeated congregational responses such as “Lord, Have Mercy” or “Kyrie, eleison”

“Glory to God in the Highest”

A psalm or other scripture song

The Gloria Patri

An anthem

Other forms of artistic expression that engage the entire congregation

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

The people prepare their hearts and minds to hear the Word of God.

The pastor, deacon or a lay worship leader leads the congregation in seeking the blessing of the Holy Spirit upon the reading, preaching, hearing, and doing of the Word.

SCRIPTURE

The people hear the scriptures read aloud.

It is customary that laity read the Old Testament and Epistle readings and lead the praying of the Psalm. The pastor may read the gospel or the text upon which the sermon will be based.

Two or three Scripture readings should be used. The Revised Common Lectionary is the recommended source for these readings. If there are not Old Testament, Epistle, and Gospel readings at each service, care should be taken that over a period of time the people hear representative readings from each.

The Scripture readings may be interspersed with:

A psalm or psalm portions, sung or spoken, after the first reading

A hymn, song or other artistic expression related to the Scriptures of the day

A sung alleluia, before and/or after the final reading, if it is the gospel

SERMON

The pastor or other authorized leader proclaims the Word of God from the scriptures read in the hearing of the people.

One or more of the Scripture readings is interpreted and a witness to the mission of God is proclaimed.

RESPONSE TO THE WORD

The pastor and others lead the people to respond to the Word of God read and proclaimed in their hearing.

Responses may include one or more of the following:

Invitation to Christian discipleship, followed by a hymn of invitation or response,
or a baptism or confirmation hymn

Appropriate portions of the Baptismal Covenant:

Holy Baptism

Confirmation

Reaffirmation of Faith

Reception into The (United) Methodist Church

Reception into the Local Congregation

Testimony or witness to God's action in the lives of people

A creed, except when already used in the Baptismal Covenant

CONCERNS AND PRAYERS

The people enact their priestly ministry of interceding for the church and the world.

The pastor or prayer leader may ask people to share particular needs or thanksgivings to be included in the prayers.

Prayer may take one or more of these forms:

Brief intercessions, petitions, and thanksgivings by the members of the congregation led by their leaders (lay or clergy). Each of these prayers may be followed by a common response, such as "Lord, hear our prayer," spoken or sung by all.

Litany of intercession and petition

A prayer led by the pastor that prompts, but does not replace, prayers offered by the people

However the prayers are offered, care should be taken by the prayer leader to ensure the people have prayed comprehensively for the church, local and global, and of all denominations, the world and its leaders, and the earth, and not only for their more immediate concerns.

THANKSGIVING AND COMMUNION

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE OR TO THANKSGIVING

The people are invited to prepare themselves to offer the Great Thanksgiving.

The pastor or deacon invite the congregation to prepare themselves to offer the Great Thanksgiving or other acts of thanksgiving by acts of confession, pardon, and offering the peace of Christ to one another.

CONFESSION, PARDON, AND PEACE

The people confess their sins, receive and give God's pardon, and offer the peace of Christ to one another.

A prayer of confession and act of pardon are normally used here. They are not necessary if already used during the Entrance or on occasions when the baptismal covenant has been reaffirmed previously in the service.

The congregation shares the peace by offering one another signs of reconciliation and love.

OFFERING

The people offer their gifts to God.

The bread and wine, if Holy Communion is to follow
Money or other resources to assist persons in need
Money or other resources to support the ministry of the Church
Other appropriate gifts, such as memorial gifts or other items to be dedicated

As the gifts are received and presented, there may be:
A song, hymn, anthem, doxology or other artistic expression

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The people, led by their authorized presider, offer themselves with their gifts of bread and wine in praise and thanksgiving to God for all God has done, is doing, and will do to redeem the whole creation

The authorized presider (elder, commissioned minister preparing to become an elder, or appointed local pastor) or deacon prepares the bread and cup.
The authorized presider and congregation join in the Great Thanksgiving that includes, generally in this order:
an opening dialogue,
thanksgiving for God's saving actions in history,
the hymns "Holy, Holy, Holy" and "Blessed is He" (Sanctus/Benedictus) or another biblical song sung in heaven, as found, for example, in Revelation (see Revelation 4:8, 11; 5:11, 13; 7:10, 12; 15:3-4; 19:6-8) sung or said together,
thanksgiving for God's mighty actions in Jesus Christ,
recalling Jesus' taking bread and cup in "remembrance of me,"
acclaiming the mystery of faith together
invoking the Holy Spirit upon the bread and cup and the assembly, and
giving glory and praise to the Holy Trinity.

The people join in the Great Amen.

All may pray the Lord's Prayer if not used earlier.

The authorized presider breaks the bread and may lift the bread and cup (*after* the Great Amen or Lord's Prayer, if used).

The bread and cup are given to the people.

The congregation may sing hymns as they receive.

Portions of bread and wine/grape juice may be given to people who will take it to the sick, imprisoned or others unable to come to the worship service.

The table is set in order.

The people pray, giving thanks for what they have received and asking God to send them into the world.

Or

If Holy Communion is not celebrated,

ACTS OF THANKSGIVING

The people offer thanksgiving to God for all God has done, is doing, and will do to redeem the whole creation.

Acts of Thanksgiving may include:

Litanies of thanksgiving,

One or more congregational songs giving thanks to God,

Musical or other artistic expressions.

The thanks offered by any means may be modeled on the Great Thanksgiving, and should be comprehensive, covering personal, local, global, historical and ongoing acts of the Triune God in creation, redemption, and the promised culmination of all things in Jesus Christ.

SENDING FORTH

The people are sent forth to live as Christ's representatives in the world.

HYMN OR SONG AND DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Facing the congregation, the authorized presider declares God's blessing.

The hymn may precede or follow the blessing.

The pastor, deacon or another leader sends the congregation into the world.

GOING FORTH

One or more of the following may be included:

Instrumental music, silence before the congregation disperses,
informal greetings, conversation, and fellowship

BAPTISM

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT I

RITE OF BAPTISM AND PROFESSION OF FAITH (OF THOSE ABLE TO ANSWER FOR THEMSELVES)

Baptism occurs in the context of a regular principal Sunday service of Word and Table. Baptism is particularly appropriate on Epiphany or The Baptism of the Lord, Sundays in Easter, the Day of Pentecost, and All Saints Day. As noted in the Basic Pattern, rites of the baptismal covenant should normally appear as one of the acts of Response to the Word after the sermon. The sermon should include specific references to baptism and to the baptismal candidates whenever baptism is to occur.

This outline may be followed when there are persons to be baptized who can make a declaration of faith for themselves, such as youth and adults.

Brackets indicates a section may be used if appropriate to the occasion.

OUTLINE:

Introduction of baptism
Presentation of Candidate(s)
Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith
Thanksgiving over the Water
Baptism and the Laying on of Hands
[Profession of Faith or Reaffirmation of Faith]
[Congregational Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant]
Reception into the Church and Local Congregation
Welcome

INTRODUCTION TO THE RITE OF BAPTISM AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

The pastor or deacon introduces the service using these or similar words:

1. Brothers and sisters in Christ: Through the Sacrament of Baptism we are initiated into Christ's holy church. We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. All this is God's gift, offered to us without price.
2. [Through profession of faith and through reaffirmation of our faith, we renew the covenant declared at our baptism, acknowledge what God is doing for us, and affirm our commitment to Christ's holy church.]

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

3. *A representative of the congregation presents the candidates with appropriate statements.*

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

4. *The pastor addresses candidates, asking them (verbatim—these words are required by the Book of Discipline):*

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,
reject the evil powers of this world,
and repent of your sin?

I do.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you
to resist evil, injustice, and oppression
in whatever forms they present themselves?

I do.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior,
put your whole trust in his grace,
and promise to serve him as your Lord,
in union with the Church which Christ has opened
to people of all ages, nations, and races?

I do.

According to the grace given to you,
will you remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church
and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?

I will.

5. *If there are sponsors, the pastor asks the sponsors if they will support and encourage the candidates in the Christian life.*

6. *The pastor asks the congregation*

if they reaffirm their rejection of sin and their commitment to Christ, and
if they will include the persons to be baptized in their care

7. *The pastor asks all present to join in affirmation of the Christian faith.* The Apostles' Creed (for a setting intended for use at baptism, see pg. 47) is the most appropriate form of affirmation at baptism, with a history in the wider church going back to at least the third century and in Methodism to the *Sunday Service* provided by John Wesley in 1784. If another affirmation is used, the Book of Discipline (Para. 217) requires it must declare our commitment to God the Father Almighty, Jesus Christ God's only Son, and the Holy Spirit using that language, verbatim.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

8. *Standing in or near the water, the pastor prays:*
recalling ways God has used water in the story of salvation,
remembering Jesus' baptism and
anointing with the Holy Spirit at the Jordan,
asking the Holy Spirit to bless the water and those who receive it
for union with Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection
and for the washing away of sin, and
offering praise to the Holy Trinity.
(for a model of this prayer, see page 48)

BAPTISM AND THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

9. *The pastor addresses each candidate by her or his Christian name (whichever name may have this designation in a particular cultural setting) and says, verbatim:*

Christian Name, I baptize you in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

The congregation responds: Amen.

Baptism may be administered by immersion, submersion, pouring or sprinkling.

Immediately after the administration of the water, the authorized presider first, followed by other worship leaders involved in the baptism and the family or sponsors, places hands on the head of each candidate, as the authorized presider says these or similar words:

Christian Name, the Holy Spirit work within you,
that being born through water and the Spirit,
you may be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.

The congregation responds: Amen.

[PROFESSION OF FAITH OR REAFFIRMATION OF FAITH

10. Used when persons previously baptized are now prepared to make a first profession of Christian faith, sometimes called "confirmation," or to reaffirm their profession.

The pastor invites persons to use the water in the font in ways that cannot be interpreted as baptism, then says to those making a profession or renewing it:

Remember you are baptized, and be thankful.

The congregation responds: Amen.

Following this, the pastor, and others if desired, place hands on the head of each person making a profession of faith or reaffirming faith. The pastor then says:

*Christian Name, the Holy Spirit work within you,
that having been born through water and the Spirit,
you may live as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.*

The congregation responds: Amen.]

11. [When there is a congregational reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant, the pastor invites persons to use the water in the font in ways that cannot be interpreted as baptism, then says:

Remember you are baptized, and be thankful.

The congregation responds: Amen.]

RECEPTION INTO THE CHURCH AND LOCAL CONGREGATION

12. *The pastor asks the newly professed and those coming into membership from other Christian denominations, verbatim:*

As members of Christ's universal Church,
will you be loyal to Christ through The United Methodist Church,
and do all in your power to strengthen its ministries?

I will.

The pastor addresses all those transferring baptized or professing membership from another United Methodist congregation into this congregation, together with those who, through baptism or confirmation, have just professed their own faith, verbatim:

As members of this congregation,
will you faithfully participate in its ministries
by your prayers, your presence,
your gifts, your service,
and your witness?

I will.

The pastor addresses the congregation on behalf of those being received as baptized members from other congregations.

Will you, the people of God in this congregation,
receive these persons, baptized in another part of Christ's holy church,
and promise to support and prepare them
to live as disciples of Jesus Christ

as you have promised to support and prepare those baptized in your midst?
We will.

WELCOME

13. When all candidates have been baptized, received as baptized or professing members, or have completed the reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant, the pastor invites the congregation to welcome them and to care for them in the future.

One or more lay leaders may join with the pastor in acts of welcome and peace.

Appropriate thanksgivings and intercessions for those who have participated in these acts should be included in the concerns and prayers that follow.

It is most fitting that the service continues with Holy Communion, in which the union of the new members with the body of Christ is most fully expressed. The newly baptized and professing members may receive communion first, and then be among those serving communion to the congregation that day.

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT II

HOLY BAPTISM FOR CHILDREN AND OTHERS UNABLE TO ANSWER FOR THEMSELVES

This service outline may be followed when there are persons to be baptized who cannot make a declaration of faith for themselves, such as infants and young children, when youth or adult baptism, profession, or reaffirmation of faith are not to be celebrated.

OUTLINE:

Introduction of baptism
Presentation of Candidate(s)
Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith
Thanksgiving over the Water
Baptism and the Laying on of Hands
Welcome and commendation

This rite is most appropriately placed in the basic pattern service of worship following the reading(s) of scripture and the sermon, as a Response to the Word.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERVICE

1. *The pastor introduces the service using these or similar words:*
Brothers and sisters in Christ:
Through the Sacrament of Baptism
we are initiated into Christ's holy church.
We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation
and given new birth through water and the Spirit.
All this is God's gift, offered to us without price.

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

2. *A representative of the congregation presents the persons to be baptized.*

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

3. *The pastor addresses parents or other sponsors asking them to reaffirm their commitment to the baptismal covenant, verbatim:*

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,
reject the evil powers of this world,
and repent of your sin?

I do.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you
to resist evil, injustice, and oppression
in whatever forms they present themselves?

I do.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior,
put your whole trust in his grace,
and promise to serve him as your Lord,
in union with the Church which Christ has opened
to people of all ages, nations, and races?

I do.

According to the grace given to you,
will you remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church
and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?

I will.

Will you nurture these children (persons)
in Christ's holy Church,
that by your teaching and example they may be guided
to accept God's grace for themselves,
to profess their faith openly,
and to lead a Christian life?

I will.

4. *The pastor asks the congregation:*
if they reaffirm their rejection of sin and their commitment to Christ, and
if they will include the persons to be baptized in their care.
5. *The pastor asks the congregation to join in affirmation of the Christian faith.*
The Apostles' Creed (for a setting intended for use at baptism, see pg. 47) is the
most appropriate form of affirmation at baptism, with a history in the wider
church going back to at least the third century and in Methodism to the *Sunday
Service* provided by John Wesley in 1784. If another affirmation is used, the Book
of Discipline (Para. 217) requires it must declare our commitment to God the
Father Almighty, Jesus Christ God's only Son, and the Holy Spirit using that
language verbatim.

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

6. *Standing in or near the water, the pastor prays:*
recalling ways God has used water in the story of salvation,
remembering Jesus's baptism and anointing with the Holy Spirit at the Jordan,
and asking the Holy Spirit to bless the water and those who receive it
for union with Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection
and the washing away of sin, and
offering praise to the Holy Trinity.

(for a model of this prayer, see page 48)

BAPTISM AND THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

7. The pastor addresses the child by the child's Christian name and says the non-italicized words, verbatim:

Christian Name, I baptize you in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

The congregation responds: Amen.

Baptism may be administered by immersion, submersion, pouring or sprinkling.

Immediately after the administration of the water, the pastor first, followed by other worship leaders involved in the baptism and the family or sponsors, may place hands on the head of each candidate, as the pastor says these or similar words:

Christian Name, the Holy Spirit work within you,
that being born through water and the Spirit,
you may be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ.

The congregation responds: Amen.

WELCOME AND COMMENDATION

8. When all candidates have been baptized, the pastor invites the congregation to welcome them and to care for them in the future.

One or more lay leaders may join with the pastor in acts of welcome and peace.

Appropriate thanksgivings and intercessions for those who have participated in these acts should be included in the concerns and prayers which follow.

It is most fitting that the service continues with Holy Communion, in which the union of the new members with the body of Christ is most fully expressed. The newly baptized members may receive communion first, and then be among those serving communion to the congregation that day. For infants and others unable to serve, parents or sponsors who are baptized may serve while the newly baptized child is present.

A SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

Much of this service reflects European and North American practices rather than theological mandates. Adapt accordingly. Some portions are in brackets to indicate they only need to be used if appropriate to the cultural context and local laws or custom.

This service of Christian marriage is provided for couples who wish to solemnize their marriage in a service of Christian worship, parallel in its structure to the Sunday service of Word and Table. Christian marriage is proclaimed as an extension of the baptismal covenant. Both words and actions consistently reflect the belief that husband and wife are equal partners in Christian marriage and that they are entering into the marriage of their own volition.

The responsible clergy person (deacon, elder, commissioned minister, or appointed local pastor) is in charge of the service.

Ethnic and cultural traditions are encouraged and may be incorporated into the service at the discretion of the responsible clergy (elder, deacon, commissioned minister, or appointed local pastor), provided they do not violate our understanding of the nature of Christian marriage, such as any rite implying the transfer of property, including the giving of a dowry. If the giving of a dowry is culturally normative, it should be made part of a ceremony separate from the rite of Christian marriage.

All present are active participants in the service. They give their blessing to the couple and to the marriage, and they join in prayer and praise.

When Holy Communion is celebrated, all Christians present are invited to the Lord's table. When Holy Communion is not celebrated, an exchange of the peace of Christ should be followed by appropriate acts of thanksgiving. Because Christian marriage references and serves as an extension of the baptismal covenant, a confession of sin and act of pardon are not necessary in this service.

OUTLINE

ENTRANCE

Gathering
Greeting

[DECLARATION OF INTENTION]*

[Declaration by the man and woman]

[Response of the families and people]

**Note: Laws in some jurisdictions may require marriage services to include a declaration of intent to be considered legal and valid.*

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Scripture lessons

Sermon or other witness to Christian marriage
Intercessory prayer

THE MARRIAGE

Exchange of vows
[Blessing and exchange of tokens (rings, gifts, etc.)]
Declaration of marriage
Blessing of the marriage

HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Lord's Table
The Peace
Preparing the Lord's Table
The Great Thanksgiving (page 37)
The Distribution
Thanksgiving after Communion

OR

ACTS OF THANKSGIVING

SENDING FORTH

Dismissal with Blessing
Going forth

A SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

An Order and Description

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

While the people gather, instrumental or vocal music may be offered.
During the entrance of the wedding party, there may be instrumental music,
a song a hymn, a psalm, a canticle, an anthem or other artistic expressions.

GREETING

The responsible clergy (deacon, elder, commissioned minister, or appointed local pastor) greets the people and introduces the service as a joining of the couple in a covenant of Christian marriage grounded in the baptismal covenant.

[DECLARATION OF INTENTION]

[DECLARATION BY THE MAN AND THE WOMAN]

The responsible clergy asks the man and the woman to declare their intention to enter into union with one another through the grace of Christ who has called them into union

with himself in baptism.

*Note: Though a public declaration of consent in addition to the vows may be optional, marriage laws in some places may require it and may prescribe the language to be used. United Methodist clergy are required to perform the marriage ceremony in accordance with our ritual **and** the laws of the jurisdiction where it occurs. See Book of Discipline 2012, 340.1.3.a, page 268.*

RESPONSE OF THE FAMILIES AND PEOPLE

The responsible clergy announces the marriage of the couple unites two families and creates a new one and asks both of the families and the congregation if they will bless the marriage. The pastor may invite both of the families and congregation to express their support and blessing in ways appropriate to the people and the culture. **In no instance should the actions or words used convey any idea of transferring ownership of either of the couple to the other, such as the giving or receiving of a dowry, as if the marriage were a property transaction.**

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

SCRIPTURE LESSON(S)

Suggested readings include Genesis 1:26–28,31a; Song of Solomon 2:10–14, 16a, 8:6–7; Isaiah 43:1–7; Isaiah 55:10–13; Isaiah 61:10–62:3, Isaiah 63:7–9; Romans 12:1–2, 9–18; 1 Corinthians 13; 2 Corinthians 5:14–17; Ephesians 2:4–10; Ephesians 4:1–6; Ephesians 4:25–5:2; Philippians 2:1–2; Philippians 4:4–9; Colossians 3:12–17; 1 John 3:18–24; 1 John 4:7–16; Revelation 19:1, 5–9a; Matthew 5:1–10; Matthew 7:21, 24–27; Matthew 22:35–40; Mark 2:18–22; Mark 10:42–45; John 2:1–11; John 15:9–17

A hymn, psalm, canticle, anthem, instrumental music or other artistic expressions may be offered before, after or between the readings.

SERMON OR OTHER WITNESS TO CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

The responsible clergy or lay leader may lead all assembled in prayer for the couple, the church, leaders in the community and the world, the earth and people who are needy or suffering.

THE MARRIAGE

EXCHANGE OF VOWS

The woman and man face each other, [joining hands,] and declare their promise of life-long commitment each to the other. The responsible clergy may prompt their promise using these or similar words:

Man to the woman:

In the name of God,
I, *name*, take you, *name*, to be my wife,
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish,
until we are parted by death.
This is my solemn vow.

Woman to the man:

In the name of God,
I, *name*, take you, *name*, to be my husband,
to have and to hold
from this day forward,
for better, for worse,
for richer, for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
to love and to cherish,
until we are parted by death.
This is my solemn vow.

BLESSING [AND EXCHANGE OF SYMBOLS OF THE PROMISE]

If it is the custom for the man and woman to give symbols of their promise to each other, the responsible clergy may invite them to exchange these symbols in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit as signs of their vows.

DECLARATION OF MARRIAGE

[The wife and husband may join hands.] The responsible clergy addresses them with these or similar words:

You have declared your consent and vows before God and this congregation.
May God confirm your covenant and fill you both with grace.

Then the responsible clergy announces that the couple, having given themselves to each other by solemn vows, is husband and wife in the name of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and that no one should separate what God has joined together. The congregation may all respond with the **Amen**.

A doxology or other hymn may be sung.

BLESSING OF THE MARRIAGE

The responsible clergy blesses the man and woman in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and asks God to enable them to keep their marriage covenant.

The congregation joins the blessing prayer with the **Amen**.

HOLY COMMUNION

When Holy Communion is celebrated, the service continues with the exchange of peace, the preparation of the table, the Great Thanksgiving, the Lord's Prayer, breaking the bread and giving to the people. An authorized presider (commissioned minister preparing to become an elder, appointed local pastor, or an elder) presides at the Lord's table. A deacon or lay leader may assist by preparing the table, leading intercessions (if not already offered), holding the text of the liturgy for the presider, and serving the consecrated elements along with the authorized presider. A sample Great Thanksgiving for a celebration of marriage may be found beginning on page 37.

When Holy Communion is not to be celebrated, the service continues with an act of Thanksgiving and the Lord's Prayer.

OR

THE PEACE AND ACT OF THANKSGIVING

When Holy Communion is not celebrated, the responsible clergy extends the peace of Christ to all. The couple and clergy involved may greet each other, after which signs of peace may be exchanged through the congregation. After the peace, the responsible clergy or lay leader lead the congregation in one or more acts of thanksgiving to God for God's mighty acts of salvation in Jesus Christ, for the gift of love, for the blessing of marriage, and for the newly married couple. Acts of thanksgiving may include prayer, song, dance, instrumental or vocal music and other festive arts.

SENDING FORTH

[HYMN OR SONG]

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

Addressing the wife and husband, the responsible clergy reminds them of their Christian vocation to love each other and to serve God and neighbor in all that they do, concluding with this or some other blessing of the couple and all the people:

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

All respond Amen.

GOING FORTH

A hymn or song may be sung or instrumental music played as the couple, the wedding party, and the people leave.

A SERVICE OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION

Much of this service reflects European and North American practices rather than theological mandates. Adapt as needed for your particular context. Some portions are in brackets to indicate they only need to be used if appropriate to the cultural context and local custom.

Use of the term ‘Service of Death and Resurrection’ expresses clearly the twofold nature of what is done: the facts of death and bereavement are honestly faced, and the gospel of resurrection is celebrated in the context of God’s baptismal covenant with us in Christ. It is a service that celebrates the resurrection of Christ and the hope of resurrection for his faithful disciples.

*The service should be held at the church building or wherever the church customarily gathers for worship if at all possible and at a time when members of the congregation can be present. **The responsible clergy person (deacon, elder, commissioned minister, or appointed local pastor) is in charge of the service.** Other clergy may participate at the invitation of the responsible clergy. This service is intended for use with the earthly remains of the deceased present, but it can be adapted for use at memorial services or other occasions.*

Ethnic and cultural traditions not contrary to the theology of our Church and this liturgy are encouraged and may be incorporated into the service at the discretion of the pastor. The person in charge of the music should be consulted and work with the pastor and the family in all decisions on music selection.

Plans for the service and all other ministries following a death should be made in consultation with the family and subject to the approval of the responsible clergy (elder, deacon, provisional member or appointed local pastor). If the family requests other religious rites in addition to the Service of Death and Resurrection, the responsible clergy should plan carefully the sequence and interrelationship of these so that the Christian service is not interrupted with other rites, and its integrity is supported and not compromised.

The committal may take place immediately following the funeral, or it may be a separate service at another time and place.

OUTLINE:

ENTRANCE

Gathering

Greeting

Act of Praise

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

Scripture lessons

Sermon

Naming

[Witness]

Creed or Affirmation of Faith

Music or other congregational responses

COMMENDATION

Prayers

[COMMITTAL]

[If part of a single service at the graveside].

HOLY COMMUNION

The peace of Christ is exchanged.

The table is prepared.

The Great Thanksgiving is offered. (See page 41)

The consecrated elements are distributed.

OR

ACTS OF THANKSGIVING

The peace of Christ is exchanged.

The people offer acts of thanksgiving for God's abiding presence in times of pain and grief and promise of resurrection and new creation. The Lord's Prayer may conclude this offering of thanksgiving.

SENDING FORTH

Dismissal with Blessing

A SERVICE OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION

An Order and Description

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

The responsible clergy (deacon, elder, commissioned minister, or appointed local pastor) may greet the family. Instrumental music appropriate for worship or congregational singing may be offered during the gathering.

CALL TO WORSHIP

The responsible clergy may process into the worship space, with or following the coffin or urn.

When the coffin or urn is at its resting place for the service, the responsible clergy faces the coffin or urn and the people and calls the congregation to worship with these or similar words:

Dying, Christ destroyed our death.

Rising, Christ restored our life.

Christ will come again in glory.

As in baptism Name put on Christ,

so in Christ may Name be clothed with glory.

Here and now, dear friends, we are God's children.

What we shall be has not yet been revealed;

but we know that when he appears, we shall be like him,

for we shall see him as he is.

Those who have this hope purify themselves as Christ is pure.

The responsible clergy continues:

Jesus said:

“I am the resurrection and I am life.

Those who believe in me, even though they die, yet shall they live,
and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die.

I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

I died, and behold I am alive for evermore, and I hold the keys of hell and death.

Because I live, you shall live also.”

[GREETING]

The responsible clergy speaks words of greeting in the name of Christ.

The responsible clergy continues by noting the assembly is gathered to praise God and to witness to their faith as they give thanks for the deceased's life, acknowledge their loss and grief, and confess the hope of resurrection and new creation found in the gospel.

ACT OF PRAISE

May be a hymn, song, or other artistic expression involving the entire gathered community.

PRAYER

The responsible clergy may lead the assembly in appropriate songs or prayers of petition for God's help, thanksgiving for the communion of saints, confession of sin, and assurance of pardon. Psalm 130 or another Psalm of lament may be recited or sung.

PROCLAMATION AND RESPONSE

SCRIPTURE LESSON(S)

Suggested readings include Isaiah 40:1-8; Isaiah 40:28-31; Exodus 14:5-14, 19-31; Isaiah 43:1-3a, 5-7, 13, 15, 18-19, 25; 44:6, 8a; Isaiah 55:1-3, 6-13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-2a, 12, 16-18, 20, 35-38a, 42b-44, 54-55, 57; Revelation 21:1-7; Romans 8:1-2, 11, 14, 17-18, 28, 31-32, 35-39; 2 Corinthians 4:5-18; Ephesians 1:15-23; 2:1-10; 1 Peter 1:3-9, 13, 21-25; Revelation 7:2-3, 9-17; John 14:1-4, 18-19, 25-27; Luke 24:13-35; John 11:1-4, 20-27, 32-35, 38-44

A hymn, psalm, or other music may be offered before, after or between the readings.

Psalms 23, 42, 43, 46, 90, 91, 103, 116, and 121 are especially appropriate.

SERMON

A sermon may be preached, proclaiming the gospel in the face of death. It may include acts of naming and witness listed below.

NAMING

The responsible clergy and others may share in story or stories the life and death of the deceased.

[CREED OR AFFIRMATION OF FAITH]

[WITNESS]

The responsible clergy, family, friends, and members of the congregation may briefly share stories that express their thankfulness to God for the grace they have received in the life of the deceased and their Christian faith and joy.

Signs of faith, hope, and love may be exchanged.

[HYMN OR SONG]

COMMENDATION

The responsible clergy with others may lay hands on the coffin or urn or raise hands in prayer and commend the deceased to God in the hope of the resurrection.

COMMITTAL

If the entire service is held at the graveside, the committal immediately follows the commendation. See page 33 for a rite of committal.

PRAYERS

One or more prayers may be offered. These may include prayers for the family, prayers of thanksgiving for the life of the deceased, and prayers of thanksgiving for the hope of resurrection and new creation. A deacon may lead these prayers.

HOLY COMMUNION

When Holy Communion is celebrated, the service continues with the peace, the preparation of the table, the Great Thanksgiving over the elements and the Lord's Prayer, breaking the bread and giving to the people. The presider is an elder, a commissioned minister preparing to become an elder, or appointed local pastor. A deacon or lay leader may assist by preparing the table, holding the text of the liturgy for the presider, leading intercessions (if not already included in the service) and serving the consecrated elements along with the authorized presider. For a sample Great Thanksgiving for a Service of Death and Resurrection, see p. 41.

While the bread and cup are given, the congregation may sing hymns or songs that express the people's loving communion with God and one another. Familiar hymns the people can sing from memory are particularly effective.

When all have received, the Lord's table is put in order and responsible clergy and people offer a concluding prayer of thanksgiving.

OR

ACTS OF THANKSGIVING

If Holy Communion is not celebrated, the peace is exchanged and acts of thanksgiving may follow. These may include prayer, song, dance, instrumental or vocal music and other artistic expressions giving voice to the people's thanksgiving for the gifts of life, health and strength, God's power to comfort us and call to comfort one another in times of pain and grief, and the promise of resurrection and new creation. These may be concluded by all praying or singing the Lord's Prayer.

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

The responsible clergy, facing the people, may dismiss and bless the people with these or similar words, from Hebrews 12:20-21:

May the God of peace,
who, by the blood of the eternal covenant,
has brought back from the dead
the Great Shepherd of the sheep,
our Lord Jesus,
purify you in all goodness,
that you may do his will,
and so make you pleasing in his sight;
through Jesus Christ,
to whom be the glory forever. **Amen.**

A RITE OF COMMITTAL

If the Service of Death and Resurrection was held in the church and the burial will be somewhere else, a Rite of Committal may follow at the final resting-place. If the entire service is held at the graveside, the Committal immediately follows the commendation.

*This order is intended primarily for burial in the ground.
However, it can be adapted for cremation or the interment of ashes,
for burial above ground or at sea, or for donation of the body for medical purposes.*

The responsible clergy person is in charge and makes all final decisions about the contents of this service. If the family requests other rites in addition to the Service of Committal, the responsible clergy (deacon, elder, appointed local pastor, or commissioned minister) must approve such rites and plan carefully their sequence and interrelationship so the purposes of this service are best served.

Songs, music or other arts may be included as deemed appropriate by the responsible clergy.

GATHERING

When the people have gathered, the responsible clergy says one or more of the following:

Psalm 124:8

1 Corinthians 15:51, 53, 54b-55, 57

Psalm 16:9, 11

PRAYER

The responsible clergy may pray for the church to commit itself and those they love to God.

SCRIPTURE

John 12:24-26 or another appropriate scripture may be read.

ACT OF COMMITTAL

The responsible clergy stands at the head of the coffin, faces it and the congregation, and may cast earth upon it as it is lowered into the grave she or he commends the remains of the deceased to the earth in these or similar words:

This body/ these earthly remains we commit to the ground

(to the elements, to this resting place),

earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust.

(TRADITIONAL)

Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.

Yes, says the Spirit, they will rest from their labors

for their deeds follow them.

(REVELATION 14:13, ALT.)

PRAYER FOR THE LIVING

The responsible clergy may offer a prayer for God's care for those who grieve and our mutual care of each other, in these or similar words:

Eternal God, you have shared with us the life of *Name*.
Before *he/she* was ours, *he/she* is yours.
For all that *Name* has given us to make us what we are,
for that of *him/her* which lives and grows in each of us,
and for *his/her* life that in your love will never end,
we give you thanks.
As now we offer *Name* back into your arms,
comfort us in our loneliness,
strengthen us in our weakness,
and give us courage to face the future unafraid.
Draw those of us who remain in this life closer to one another,
make us faithful to serve one another,
and give us to know that peace and joy which is eternal life;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER (All pray together)

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING

The responsible clergy dismisses the people, adapting Jude 24-25 or another blessing.

Now to the One who is able to keep you from falling,
and to make you stand without blemish
in the presence of God's glory with rejoicing,
to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord,
be glory, majesty, power, and authority,
before all time and now and forever. **Amen.**

MODEL PRAYERS AND RESOURCES

A GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR GENERAL USE

*This text can be used as a model for the prayer over the bread and cup.
It may be used by the authorized presider (elder, appointed local pastor, or
commissioned minister preparing to become an elder) either in a congregational service
or with the sick and home bound.*

*The authorized presider and people may begin by using this ancient dialogue that
reminds all that the Great Thanksgiving is the action of the whole assembly:*

Presider: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

The authorized presider may raise hands, prompting the people to do likewise.

Presider: Lift up your hearts.

People: **We lift them to the Lord.**

Presider: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

The authorized presider continues, praying to God:

Blessed are you, O Father/Almighty God, who with your Word and Holy Spirit
has created all things and called them good.

Blessed are you, O God, for ever and ever.

Worthy are you, O God, who delivers your people from bondage and death,
and covenants to make us a light to the nations.

Worthy are you, O God, for ever and ever.

Holy are you, O God, who has shown unfailing compassion on all flesh,
forgiving our sins, and restoring us to the paths of righteousness and justice,
as saints and angels and all the company of heaven continually proclaim:

The presider may lower hands.

**Holy, Holy Holy, Lord God Almighty,
heaven and earth are filled with your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The presider may raise hands.

Blessed, worthy and holy are you,
made known to us in Jesus Christ, Word made flesh
who came and dwelt among us.

He proclaimed the good news of your kingdom come
and coming still
by healing the sick,
feeding the hungry,
eating with sinners,
cleansing the unclean,
and delivering people from bondage
to evil, brokenness and death.

The presider may hold hands, palms down, over the bread, or touch the bread, or lift the bread.

On the night before he was crucified,
Jesus took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to the disciples, and said:

**“Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”**

The presider may hold hands, palms down, over the cup, or touch the cup, or lift the cup.

When the supper was over he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to the disciples, and said:

**“Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”**

The presider may raise hands.

In his suffering and death
you took upon yourself our sin and death
and destroyed their power forever.

You raised from the dead this same Jesus,
ascended and reigning with you in glory,
and poured upon us your Holy Spirit,

to empower and feed us to be your people
for the life of the world.

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.

**Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.**

By your Spirit, make us one with Christ,
one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory
and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

**Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.
Amen.**

A GREAT THANKGIVING FOR USE AT A SERVICE OF MARRIAGE

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

The authorized presider (elder, commissioned minister preparing to become an elder, or appointed local pastor) may lift hands and keep them raised

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing,
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Father Almighty (almighty God), Creator of heaven and earth.

You formed us in your image, male and female you created us.
You gave us the gift of marriage, that we might fulfill each other.

And so,
with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

The presider may lower hands.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The presider may raise hands.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant
by water and the Spirit,
from which flows the covenant love of husband and wife.

The presider may hold hands, palms down, over the bread, or touch the bread, or lift the bread.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us,
he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread,
gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

The presider may hold hands, palms down, over the cup, or touch the cup, or lift the cup.

When the supper was over he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you;
this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it,
in remembrance of me."

The presider may raise hands.

And so,
in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice,
in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

The presider may hold hands, palms down, over the bread and cup.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ,
redeemed by his blood.

[If the presider has not already offered a prayer of blessing for the new couple before the Great Thanksgiving, the presider may do so here, extending hands over the husband and wife.]

[By the same Spirit bless *Name* and *Name*,
that their love for each other
may reflect the love of Christ for us
and grow from strength to strength
as they faithfully serve you in the world.
Defend them from every enemy.
Lead them into all peace.
Let their love for each other
be a seal upon their hearts,
a mantle about their shoulders,
and a crown upon their heads.
Bless them
in their work and in their companionship;
in their sleeping and in their waking;
in their joys and in their sorrows;
in their lives and in their deaths.
Finally, by your grace,
bring them and all of us to that table
where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home.]

The presider may raise hands.

For with all your Church, in earth and in heaven,
and with all creation across all time and space,
we give all honor and all glory to you,
seated upon the throne,
and to Christ the Lamb,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit
One God, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The pastor's hands may be extended in open invitation.

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

The presider may raise hands.

All pray the Lord's Prayer.

BREAKING THE BREAD

*The presider, still standing behind the Lord's table facing the people, breaks the bread
and then lifts the cup, in silence or with appropriate words.*

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

*The bread and wine are given to the people, with these or other words being exchanged.
The husband and wife may assist in the distribution.*

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**
The blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

*While the bread and cup are given, the congregation may sing hymns, or there may be
vocal or instrumental music.*

When all have received, the Lord's table is put in order.

The presider may then offer the following prayer:

Eternal God, we give you thanks
that you have brought *Name* and *Name* [and their families and friends]
together at the table of your family.
Help them grow in love and unity,
that they may rejoice together all the days of their lives

and in the wedding feast of heaven.
Grant this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A GREAT THANKSGIVING FOR A SERVICE OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.

*The authorized presider (elder, commissioned minister preparing
to become an elder, or appointed local pastor) may lift hands and keep them raised.*

Lift up your hearts.
We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right,
that we should always and everywhere give thanks to you,
Father Almighty (almighty God), Creator of heaven and earth;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who rose victorious from the dead
and comforts us with the blessed hope of everlasting life.

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven
we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

The presider may lower hands.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!**

The presider may raise hands.

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ.
By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection
you gave birth to your Church,
delivered us from slavery to sin and death,
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.
When the Lord Jesus ascended, he promised to be with us always
in the power of your Word and Holy Spirit.

The presider may hold hands, palms down, over the bread, or touch the bread, or lift the bread.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread,
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."

The presider may hold hands, palms down, over the cup, or touch the cup, or lift the cup.

When the supper was over he took the cup,
gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:
"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The presider may raise hands.

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

The presider may hold hands, palms down, over the bread and cup.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, gathered here,
and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

The presider may raise hands.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ,
one with each other, and one in communion with all your saints,
especially *Name* and all those most dear to us,
whom we now remember in the silence of our hearts.

A time of silence for remembrance.

Finally, by your grace, bring them and all of us to that table
where your saints feast for ever in your heavenly home.
Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

The presider may extend hands in open invitation.

And now, with the confidence of children of God, let us pray:

The presider may raise hands. All pray the Lord's Prayer.

BREAKING THE BREAD

The presider, still standing behind the Lord's table facing the people, breaks the bread and then lifts the cup, in silence or with appropriate words.

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

The bread and wine are given to the people, with these or other words being exchanged:

The body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

The blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

While the bread and cup are given, the congregation may sing hymns, or there may be vocal or instrumental music. In addition to hymns suggested and under Eternal Life and Funerals and Memorial Services in UMH, many other hymns in UMH are effective in expressing the people's loving communion with God and with one another. It is particularly effective if the people can sing from memory during communion.

When all have received, the Lord's table is put in order. The responsible clergy leads the congregation to pray:

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION

Eternal God, we give you thanks
for this holy mystery
in which you have given yourself to us,
and united us with you, with each other
and with all who have believed,
but we no longer see.
Send us forth in the strength of your Spirit,
to comfort one another in our grief,
and to be witnesses of the hope of resurrection
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
the firstborn of the dead,
and the ruler of all
in earth and in heaven.

Amen.

A SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE WITH PERSONS WHO ARE SICK OR HOMEBOUND

Since the earliest Christian times, communion has been brought as an extension of the congregation's worship to sick or homebound persons unable to attend congregational worship.

The following service is very flexible, depending upon the circumstances of the pastoral visit. "The people" may be simply the pastor and one other person. The service may be very informal and conversational. There should be every possible sensitivity to the particular needs of the person(s) receiving communion. When possible, other representatives from the congregation are encouraged to be present.

The pastor, a deacon, commissioned ministers or laypersons at the direction of the pastor, may distribute the consecrated bread and cup to sick or homebound persons as soon as feasible following a service of Word and Table as an extension of that service. When consecrated bread and cup are used, the Great Thanksgiving is omitted. Thanks should always be given after the bread and cup are received.

Those receiving communion are invited to participate in any ways they are able. Sometimes this may simply be gestures and expression. Familiar acts of worship persons may know by memory— the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, or the Twenty-third Psalm, for instance— may be used. Sometimes it is possible to sing one or more hymns. In cases where allergy or swallowing difficulties make it impossible for the person to receive in one or either kind, the bread may be dipped into the wine and presented for the person to see or touch rather than consume.

Those distributing communion should also be sensitive to the power of acts such as calling the person by name, touching the person, encouraging the remembrance of significant experiences, and allowing sick or homebound persons to minister to the visitors.

ENTRANCE

The people come together and exchange greetings in the Lord's name.

THE WORD OF GOD

Scriptures are read and interpreted, and prayer and praise are offered.

INVITATION

Christ our Lord invites to his table
all who love him and seek to grow into his likeness.
Let us draw near with faith, make our humble confession,
and prepare to receive this Holy Sacrament.

CONFESSION AND PARDON

We do not presume to come to this your table, merciful Lord,

**trusting in our own goodness, but in your unfailing mercy.
We are not worthy that you should receive us.
Only give your word, and we shall be healed;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hear the good news:

Christ died for us while we were yet sinners,
proving God's love toward us.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!

THE PEACE

Signs and words of God's peace are exchanged.

TAKING THE BREAD AND CUP

The bread and wine are prepared..

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

An authorized presider (elder, commissioned minister preparing to become an elder, or appointed local pastor) prays as follows if the bread and cup are to be consecrated.

If the bread and cup have already been consecrated in a regular worship service, this prayer is omitted and the pastor or layperson may proceed directly to the Lord's Prayer and the words of distribution which follow this prayer.

The authorized presider begins:

Lift up your heart(s) and give thanks to the Lord our God.

Those present may offer their thanks to God for gifts of life and salvation. The authorized presider proceeds to pray:

Holy One, Full of Compassion, Creator of heaven and earth,
you made us in your image, to love and to be loved.

When we turned away, and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

By the suffering, death, and resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ
you delivered us from slavery to sin and death
and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which Jesus gave himself up for us he took bread,
gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over he took the cup,

gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said:

"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,

poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ,
we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving
as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us,
as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, and on these gifts of bread and wine.
Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ,
that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other,
and one in ministry to all the world,
until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through Christ, with Christ, and in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.
Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BREAKING THE BREAD

In silence or with appropriate words.

GIVING THE BREAD AND CUP

With these or other words being exchanged:

Name, the body of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**
Name, the blood of Christ, given for you. **Amen.**

*When all have received, the Lord's table is put in order, and all give thanks
for the body and blood of Christ given in this holy mystery. This prayer is suggested:*

Most bountiful God, we give you thanks for the world you have created,
for the gift of life, and for giving yourself to us in Jesus Christ,
whose holy life, suffering and death, and glorious resurrection
have delivered us from slavery to sin and death.

We thank you that in the power of your Holy Spirit
you have fed us in this Sacrament, united us with Christ,
and given us a foretaste of your heavenly banquet.

We are your children, and yours is the glory,
one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

After giving thanks, a hymn, song, or chorus may be sung.

BLESSING

If a layperson offers the blessing, she or he substitutes “us” for “you” in the following prayer:

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you [all]. **Amen.**

THE APOSTLES’ CREED FOR USE AT BAPTISM

This setting of the Apostles’ Creed is appropriate for use at #8 in Baptismal Covenant I (page 17) and #5 in Baptismal Covenant II (page 21).

Leader: Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**ALL: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.**

Leader: Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**ALL: I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

Leader: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**ALL: I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

This prayer may be used as a model for the prayer over the water prior to baptism at no. 8 in Baptismal Covenant Service I (page 17) and at no. 5 in Baptismal Covenant Service II (page 21).

Pastor: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And also with you.

Pastor: Let us pray.

Eternal Father/Almighty God:

When nothing existed but chaos,
you swept across the dark waters
and brought forth light.

In the days of Noah

you saved those on the ark through water.
After the flood you set in the clouds a rainbow.
When you saw your people as slaves in Egypt,
you led them to freedom through the sea.
Their children you brought through the Jordan
to the land which you promised.

In the fullness of time you sent Jesus,
nurtured in the water of a womb.
He was baptized by John and anointed by your spirit.
He called his disciples
to share in the baptism of his death and resurrection
and to make disciples of all nations.

Pour out your Holy Spirit,
to bless this gift of water and those who receive it,
to wash away their sin
and clothe them in righteousness
throughout their lives,
that, dying and being raised with Christ,
they may share in his final victory.

**All praise to you, Eternal Father /Almighty God,
through your Son/our Savior Jesus Christ,
who with you and the Holy Spirit
lives and reigns forever. Amen.**

Cover 4 text –General Services for Christian Worship in the Methodist Tradition

This set of services was designed and edited for new United Methodist and related churches in developing areas of the world. These services were prepared with three suppositions about the churches who would use them:

- They are churches who identify with the United Methodist tradition of worship and want to reflect that connection in the ways they worship,
- They are churches who seek guidance in shaping worship that is both appropriate to the cultural context of the local church and connected to the historic and ecumenical framework of Christian worship, and
- They are churches who want to include their own language, customs, music, practices and symbols in worship.

This volume contains the core services for congregational life: a basic pattern for weekly worship, services of baptism, a service of Christian marriage and a service of Christian burial.

The General Board of Discipleship (Discipleship Ministries) of The United Methodist Church will, as requested by bishops or other appropriate leaders, continue to seek to assist and support local leaders in creating resources appropriate for use in their region of the world.