# Covenanting, Dedication and Installation

## Union of Congregations

### Preface

The chairperson of presbytery or designate presides. This service may be adapted for the realignment of pastoral charges. The people will join in those responses in bold print.

#### Gathering

#### Prelude

#### Greeting

All stand. The presider greets the community with scripture sentences appropriate to the season or occasion and/or the following dialogue.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
**And also with you.**

#### Hymn of Praise

#### Opening Prayer

A prayer appropriate to the season or one such as the following may be offered.

#### Presider

Eternal God,  
you have called us to be members of one body.  
Join us with those who in all times and places  
have praised your name,  
that with one mind and heart,  
we may show the unity of your church,  
and bring honour to our Saviour, Jesus Christ.  
**Amen**.

#### Statement of Purpose

Through the ages, God has moved the people of Christ to join in worship and service. We are gathered here to unite two congregations in an act of covenanting. May the gifts that God has entrusted to the church be used to the glory of God.   
**Amen.**

#### Confession of Sin

#### Presider

Our God is a God of justice, waiting to be gracious to us, yearning to have mercy on us. Blessed are all who wait for the Lord in penitence and faith. Let us confess our sins to God.

**O God,**  
**We confess our tendency to love the past,**  
**flee the present, and fear the future.**  
**We rest too easily in our shortcomings,**  
**shortsightedness, and separateness.**  
**We hear more readily your word of comfort**  
**than your word of challenge.**  
**We fail you by our casual concern**  
**for the unloved, the lost, the confused.**  
**Grant us your pardon and your strength,**  
**as we start a new life together in this place.**

Silence

#### Presider

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
**Amen**.

#### Presider

Here is good news. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Be assured, therefore, that you are forgiven; be confident in your acceptance by Christ; be renewed as the people of God.

#### Act of Praise

A doxology, hymn, or anthem may be sung.

### Service of the Word

#### Proclamation of the Word and Response

#### Old Testament Lesson

Before the lesson the reader may say,

A reading from....

After the lesson the reader may say,

The Word of the Lord.

And the people say,

**Thanks be to God.**

Silence may follow.

#### Psalm

#### Epistle Lesson

Before the lesson the reader may say,

A reading from...

After the lesson the reader may say,

The Word of the Lord.

And the people say,

**Thanks be to God.**

#### Hymn, Canticle, or Anthem

#### Gospel Lesson

Before the lesson the reader may say,

The Gospel of Jesus Christ according to....

And the people respond,

**Glory to you, O Christ.**

#### Sermon

### Action Of Uniting Of Congregations

#### Presentation of Congregational Histories and Rolls

Representatives of each of the uniting congregations bring the baptismal registers and membership rolls to an officer of the presbytery.

#### Representatives

**We give you these records of N congregation, which testify to our life as members in the body of Christ.**

Statements and/or symbols that indicate the unique histories and characteristics that each of the uniting congregations brings to the new congregation may be presented by representative persons.

#### Covenant

#### Presider: addressing the people of the uniting congregations

If it is your will that these congregations should become one, I ask you now to stand and covenant together before God and in the presence of representatives of N Presbytery.

Congregations standing:**By the grace of God, we covenant together**  
**to be one people of God in this place:**  
**to celebrate God's presence in Word and Sacrament,**  
**to care for one another in love,**  
**to nurture one another in faith,**  
**and to share in the life and mission**  
**of The United Church of Canada**  
**and of the whole church of Jesus Christ.**  
**Thanks be to God.**

#### Presider

N Presbytery has consented to the union of these congregations. I now ask its representatives to stand and covenant with this uniting congregation.

#### Presbytery Members: standing

By the grace of God, we covenant with you in your life and service as Christ's people in this place. We recognize you as one congregation in this communion. We promise you our oversight and support. We share with you in the life and mission of The United Church of Canada and the whole church of Jesus Christ.

#### People

**Thanks be to God.**

### Renewal of Baptismal Faith

The people may be seated.

#### Presider

Brothers and sisters, we gather now to celebrate the gift of grace that is given to us in the sacrament of baptism.

#### People

**We are one body and one spirit.**   
**We have one hope in God's call to us.**

#### Presider

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism,  
one God and Creator of us all.

#### People

**Out of the water of baptism we rise with new life,**  
**forgiven of sin and one with Christ,**   
**members of Christ's body.**

#### Presider

Desiring the freedom of new life in Christ, do you turn away from the forces of evil and renounce their power?

#### People

**I do, by the grace of God.**

#### Presider

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as Saviour and Lord?

#### People

**I do, by the grace of God.**

The people stand.

#### Presider

As a baptized and baptizing church, do you commit yourselves to support and nurture these persons within a community that worships God, resists evil, and seeks justice?

#### People

**We do.**

#### Presider

Let us with the whole church confess our faith.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,**  
**creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,**  
**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,**  
**born of the Virgin Mary,**  
**suffered under Pontius Pilate,**  
**was crucified, 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.**

**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.**

**Amen.**

or

Let us stand and join in a statement of our communal faith.

**We are not alone,**  
**we live in God's world.**

**We believe in God:**  
**who has created and is creating,**  
**who has come in Jesus,**  
**the Word made flesh,**  
**to reconcile and make new,**  
**who works in us and others**   
**by the Spirit.**

**We trust in God.**

**We are called to be the church;**  
**to celebrate God's presence,**  
**to live with respect in Creation,**  
**to love and serve others,**  
**to seek justice and resist evil,**  
**to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,**  
**our judge and our hope.**  
**In life, in death, in life beyond death,**  
**God is with us.**

**We are not alone.**

**Thanks be to God.**

**Amen.**

The people are seated.

The presider may, with cupped hand, lift water from the font and let it fall back into it or may sprinkle water towards them (or omit all symbolic action).

#### Presider

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

#### People

**Amen.**

Those who wish to do so may come forward in turn to receive the laying on of hands, with prayer for the Spirit.

#### Presider

N , the power of the Holy Spirit work within you, that being born of water and the Spirit, you may continue to be a faithful witness of Jesus Christ.

#### People

**Amen.**

#### Act of Praise

A doxology, hymn, or anthem may be sung, or the people may express their joy with applause, a fanfare, or the ringing of bells.

#### Prayers of the People

A lay member of the congregation or diaconal minister may lead these prayers. Intercessions or thanksgivings may be offered for:

* the church universal
* the world
* the local community
* those in need
* the departed.

A litany of prayers and responses may be used.

Let us pray to the Lord.  
**Lord have mercy.**

or

Lord, hear our prayer,  
**And in your love answer.**

The leader concludes the prayer with words such as these:

Confront us, O Christ, with the hidden prejudices  
and fears that deny and betray our prayers.   
Enable us to see the causes of strife;   
remove from us all false sense of superiority.   
Teach us to grow in unity with all God's children.   
Into your hands, O Lord we commend all for whom we pray,   
trusting in your mercy now and forever.   
**Amen**.