



LITURGY OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH USA



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LITURGY OF THE
NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH

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VOLUME 1

Divine Services

The divine service

***But the Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him.
Habakkuk 2:20***

In our divine services the main elements are word and ministrations. Our divine services, their sequence, form, and content, have their basis in the activities of the Triune God upon us. The individual elements of a divine service – for example proclamation of the word, bestowal of sacraments, blessing – are not arbitrary but are necessary because we require them for our salvation.

God is the basis of the acts in the services. To allow God's presence and holiness to be accessible in the divine service is a task associated with the service at the altar. The contributing ministers are vessels in God's hand.

The liturgy specifies the defined structure in which all activities in the divine services are carried out uniformly and in a dignified manner. The repeated components in the sequence of a divine service are responsible for specifically indicating to mankind that God permanently cares for them. The liturgy also provides the minister commissioned to hold the divine service with surety in his actions. Ultimately all persons attending divine services should be able to recognize God's reliability through it and feel sheltered in His unchangeable faithfulness.

The sermon

In the sermon, we hear the word of God, which has the purpose of making God's will known. The sermon is a divine word through the Holy Spirit that contains and imparts life. This means that ministers must sanctify and prepare themselves conscientiously for the sermon.

The sacraments

The divine word from which all speech of God comes is Jesus Christ, the eternal Word through which all things were made (cf. [John 1:1-3](#)). The sacraments are also founded in Him: Holy Baptism, Holy Sealing, and Holy Communion. In these, mankind experiences God's comprehensive act of salvation. In the sacrament of Holy Communion, this divine word which became flesh in Jesus can be experienced particularly distinctly.

The prayers

The prayers that are spoken are a personal exchange with God and an answer to God's practically incomprehensible devotion to mankind. In this manner, man shows that he wishes to have fellowship with Him and receive guidance from Him.

Prayers within the fellowship of a divine service also have a characteristic of confession. Divine services are therefore a fellowship in word and sacrament, and also in confession.

The spiritual hymns

The spiritual hymns sung in a divine service are an expression of fellowship within the assembled congregation. The texts not only bind the congregation together but also to God. Spiritual hymns also provide the divine service with a festive atmosphere through which access to God's activity should be facilitated for each person present. Please refer to the [Liturgy and Music](#) article for more information.

The benediction

The benediction in the triune name of God at the end of a divine service should accompany the participants in the service into their everyday life. Believers can trust in God's grace, can feel sheltered in His love, and should entrust themselves to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They are assured of God's protecting presence in their lives to enable them to live in accordance with the gospel.

Additional points to be observed

All ministers must always be aware of God's presence in the divine service when carrying out their work. This already begins when they enter the assembled congregation. They approach the altar in quietness and dignity. Everything taking place in a divine service should be carried out with the greatest possible peace and dignity.

Ministers involved in proclaiming the word must additionally be aware that they are standing at God's altar and proclaiming His word! They should therefore pay attention to their way of speaking, their choice of words, and their conduct in the divine service. Clear and understandable speaking is always important at the altar. Not monotonous, not mumbled, but clearly audible and understandable with a lively voice. Avoid speaking too fast.

Visual contact between the minister and the congregation during the sermon generates an atmosphere of openness and personal closeness. Appropriate gestures (body language) should accompany the words and make them more understandable. Cautious mimics (facial expressions) support this.

The congregation stands when praying together. Ministers and the congregation close their eyes during all prayers. Eyes can be kept open during the other liturgical parts (blessing, dispensing of sacraments, consecration of the Holy Communion elements, etc.).

Each "Amen" spoken by the officiant is answered by the congregation with "Amen," except for the closing prayer.

Preparing and clearing the altar

The altar must be prepared early enough before members arrive. The chalices should remain on the altar after the divine service until the members have said their good-byes. When clearing the altar, the members should have left the room in which the service takes place.

Closing remarks

The divine service is an anticipated experience of the future fellowship with the triune God to which we have been called through the rebirth, and is the focal point of the life in the congregation. The liturgy has a compulsory order from the opening hymn to the closing hymn. Therefore, observation of the liturgy must be important for the serving ministers. The divine service order is provided to avoid differences in the structure of the services and thus demonstrate the Church's unity. It should be emphasized again: The liturgical texts are binding, and their wording must not be changed.

The following explanations on the liturgy should deepen your understanding of that which takes place in a divine service.

The liturgy and the liturgical texts

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- *“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all! Amen” (2 Corinthians 13:13).*

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The parts of the liturgy referred to above apply to a regular “divine service”. In special cases, “word services” can also be held. These are services without celebration of Holy Communion or further sacramental acts. The “word service” usually comprises the beginning (I), sermon (II) and end (V).

If a priestly ministry is not available, the word service can also be held by deacons at the time of a regular divine service.

Word services can be provided for the ministration and soul-care of particular groups of members if it takes place outside the regular times of the divine services. For example, services for seniors or wedding services can be carried out as a word service.

Explanations on the liturgy

Minimum duration of divine service

The divine service experience should be:

- Sundays and church holidays 60 minutes
- Weekdays 45 minutes

The maximum duration of a normal service results from the minimum duration + 15 minutes. If there are sacramental acts or bestowal of blessings, the service can be appropriately lengthened.

If only one minister is present for the main service, the minimum time of the divine service experience can also be shorter.

Before the divine service

The time prior to the divine service should have a preparatory characteristic for our inner being and serve for the personal sanctification of those present.

- Greeting of members
- Time for a personal prayer
- Musical contributions
- Greeting on special occasions
(for example, greeting of bridal couple in sacristy)
- Stillness in the congregation
(approximately 2-3 minutes before beginning of service)
- Sanctification and prayer of the ministers
(in sacristy / possibly in presence of deacons)

Opening hymn

The opening hymn has a bonding characteristic and should express the longing for God's word and grace. The officiant approves the hymn. During the opening hymn the officiant and possibly the other ministers at the altar say a silent prayer. They should then join in the congregation hymn.

Commencement in the triune name of God

The commencement in the triune name of God in a divine service is: *"In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."*

This is the invocation of God (by specifying the name of God) and the promise of the presence of the triune God by the minister. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are thus present in the congregation. The officiant should be aware of this holy moment and make sure that his manner of speaking makes the congregation aware that the Triune God is present. This can only be achieved if the officiant is filled by the fear of God and humility.

The commencement in the triune name of God is not part of the opening prayer, but is a proclamation of God's presence! On the other hand, the opening prayer is our addressing of God. Therefore, a pause in speaking of about 2-3 seconds is inserted between the triune name of God and the subsequent opening prayer.

Opening prayer

The prayer at the beginning of the divine service is the first spoken word for the congregation. The officiant prays with them, and for them. Everyone should be able to feel that they are incorporated.

The prayer should be concise and dignified. The prayer should not already be a commencement of the sermon or an attempt to explain something to God. The prayer should be spoken loudly and clearly, so that it can be followed without problem. It should last for a maximum of 3-4 minutes.

Contents of the prayer could be:

- Worship and praise of God
- Thanks for preservation, help and previous grace
- Petition for divine peace
- Petition for God's word – as comfort and orientation for all those present, and for understanding of the word
- Intercession for members who cannot be present, and seeking a connection to them
- Petition for a connection to the souls in the beyond
- Petition for a connection to the apostolate
- Petition for sanctification and undisturbed peace in the divine service

If appropriate, significant events (e.g. catastrophes) in the world or country can be referred to.

Reading of Bible text

The officiant should make sure that the Bible text is read with expression and dignity and without haste. An emphasized pronunciation helps direct the congregation's attention to the words of holy Scripture. The congregation sits down following the reading of the Bible text.

Hymn (choir or congregation hymn)

Following reading of the Bible text, a choir or congregation hymn should be sung. The text of the selected hymn should correspond to the intended direction of the divine service, and thus lead toward the subsequent sermon. The choir or congregation stand up while singing the hymn.

A Bible Reading (as specified)

Reading a passage from the Bible should, for example, lead to a better understanding of a Christian solemnity and make it clear that the Bible is the basis of our faith and is the proclamation of the gospel. Therefore, the Bible is indispensable in a divine service. The Bible reading is not identical to reading of the Bible text.

Reading a passage from the Bible is uniform with regard to date and passage as specified in the Divine Service Guide. It should be from the Bible translation used in the respective District Church. The scope is defined by a complete topic. The congregation remains seated during the Bible reading.

A minister, brother, sister, or older child with capable reading abilities can read the Bible verses. The reader should be prepared and should have practiced the verses prior to the service.

Only the officiant should read from the altar; otherwise the Bible reading is carried out in front of or next to the altar. The officiant remains standing at the altar during the reading, even if he does not read it himself.

Detailed introductory words of the officiant prior to the Bible reading are not envisaged. The reading can be announced by him using the following words: *“We shall now hear a passage from the Bible, today from. ...”*

Musical contribution following reading of passage from the Bible (optional)

A musical contribution can be made following reading of a passage from the Bible. The choir stands up when singing, the congregation can remain seated when singing.

Sermon

The message and summary points of the Divine Service Guide should become clear in the sermon. It can be helpful to establish a connection to previous divine services. The officiant serves for about 20 to 25 minutes maximum. The sermon is concluded with *“Amen.”* The congregation then answers with *“Amen.”*

Musical contribution when calling an assistant

Between the main part of the sermon and assistants, musical contributions in the form of hymns or instrumental pieces should take place, if possible. The choice on whether the congregation sings is decided by the officiant. Any musical contributions other than choir or congregation hymns should be clarified with the officiant prior to the divine service. The choir or congregation stands during the hymn.

Assisting ministers

Assisting ministers should not serve for more than 5 minutes each. Deacons can also be called to assist. In such cases, an arrangement with the deacon should be reached (at the latest) before the divine service begins. All ordained ministers should always be prepared to serve.

All parts of the sermon are completed by *“Amen.”* The congregation also replies in each case with *“Amen.”*

Musical contribution following the sermon part (optional)

The end of the main sermon can be followed by a choir hymn or instrumental musical contribution. A congregation hymn is less preferable at this point.

Preparation of congregation for forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion

Following completion of the sermon based on the Bible text, the officiant should prepare the congregation for the forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion.

The content of the preparation can refer back to the sermon, or also include the following points:

- Thanks for Christ’s sacrifice
- Remembrance of Jesus’ suffering and death
- Esteeming the value of Christ’s sacrifice
- Current realization of His sacrifice
- Remembrance of the institution of Holy Communion (the Last Supper)
- Recognition of one’s own sinfulness and debt
- Guidance toward repentance
- Remembering of the washing of feet (humility)

- Readiness to forgive/reconcile
- Remembrance that administration of sacraments has been entrusted to the apostle ministry

A distinction must be made between the forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion. At the same time, it must be understood how the two acts relate together: the forgiveness of sins provides the holiness required for receiving the sacraments, and thus worthy partaking of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The subsequent Holy Communion guarantees fellowship with and a share in the life of Jesus Christ.

Hymn of repentance

Following preparatory words for the forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion, the congregation (or choir) sings an appropriate hymn, which the officiant announces as completion of the preparation. The hymn of repentance is an expression of the joint confession of sins before God and each other.

The congregation should preferably sing the hymn of repentance so that it associates better with the text and that everybody is actively involved. Appropriate hymns, or verses, are specified.

The congregation can remain seated during the hymn of repentance. The choir should stand up if it sings alone.

“Lord’s Prayer”

The officiant invites the congregation to pray the “Lord’s Prayer.” He can say the following words, or something similar: *“We want to stand up and pray the prayer which the Lord Jesus taught us.”*

The “Lord’s Prayer” is spoken by the whole congregation standing.

Absolution

The “Lord’s Prayer” is followed by the absolution with the following wording: *“In the commission of my sender the Apostle I proclaim unto you the glad tidings: in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, your sins are forgiven. The peace of the Risen One abide with you! Amen.”*

The priestly ministry makes it clear that he has been commissioned by the apostle ministry to proclaim the forgiveness of sins. The absolution is not a prayer. Reading is permissible if the officiant feels unsure of the liturgical text. The congregation stands during the absolution.

Eucharistic prayer

The Eucharistic prayer includes praise and thanks for Christ’s sacrifice. It serves for the remembrance of Jesus Christ’s suffering and death. At the same time, it should be a reminder that Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of Holy Communion and called His disciples, the apostles, to proclaim the gospel in all the world. We bring our thanks for the mission of the apostles in the past and present.

Focal points of the Eucharistic prayer can therefore be:

- Thanks for the experienced grace in the forgiveness of sins
- Thanks for Jesus Christ’s sacrifice
- Thanks for the Holy Communion instituted by the Lord
- Petition for strength to prove ourselves worthy of His grace
- Petition for help in our efforts to become worthy

The Eucharistic prayer is concluded with “*Amen.*”

Further sacraments and acts

The dispensing of sacraments and acts, namely Holy Baptism with water, Holy Sealing, adoption, or confirmation, is carried out following the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, but prior to consecration of Holy Communion. The forgiveness of sins provides the sanctification required for receiving the sacraments and these acts. The sacraments and acts mentioned also represent a confession. This is associated with the permanent participation in Holy Communion.

The recipients of these acts receive Holy Communion together with the ministers and congregation and not directly following the act and separate from the others. This expresses that they are (now) part of the congregation. This underlines the fellowship characteristic of Holy Communion. The ministers and the congregation are included equally in celebration of this fellowship.

If appropriate, the recipients can be accompanied to the altar and back into the congregation again by a musical contribution.

Introduction to Holy Communion

Following the Eucharistic prayer (and the dispensing of sacraments and acts, if applicable), the officiant stands behind the altar and introduces Holy Communion with the words: “*And now we shall celebrate Holy Communion.*”

Uncovering of the communion chalices

The invitation to celebration of Holy Communion is followed by quiet moments. During this time, attention is called to the visible, perceivable uncovering of the communion chalices.

Only after the absolution is pronounced over the repentant and purified congregation should the uncovering of the chalices take place the Holy Communion elements be present openly for the actual celebration of communion.

It should be ensured that this part of the liturgy is carried out in complete silence. The congregation should experience it in complete awareness, and remains standing.

Uncovering of the chalices is not usually carried out by the officiant. If no other priestly ministries are present, Deacons can be used here. The person to uncover the chalices, as well as those assigned to serve Holy Communion, should be informed before the service. The officiant, if he is not the only minister and therefore has to open the chalices himself, remains in reverent silence during this time.

Once the ministers have uncovered the chalices and have returned to their places, the officiant subsequently announces to the congregation: “*And now the Lord’s table is prepared.*”

Consecration

Through consecration of bread and wine by the priestly ministry, the body and blood of Christ become present. During consecration of the elements, the officiant begins by extending his arms and “covering” the chalices with his hands. If chalices are only on one side of the altar, both arms can point in this direction.

Reading of the consecration text is permissible if the officiant feels unsure of the liturgical text.

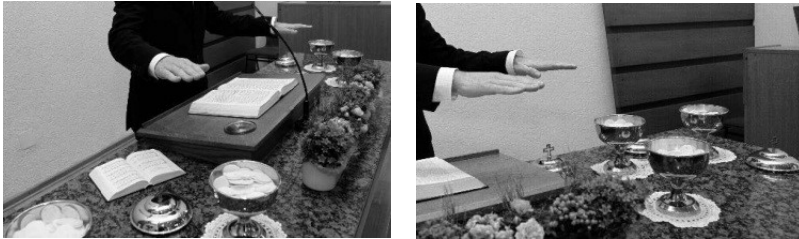


Photo on left: The officiant extends his arms for the consecration. His hands “cover” the chalices.

Photo on right: Consecration gesture if chalices are only present on one side of the altar.

The consecration text is largely taken from [1 Corinthians 11:24-26](#). This is the oldest known consecration text. Here Apostle Paul cites the words of Jesus and describes the fundamental content of Holy Communion.

Consecration text

**In the name of God, the Father,
the Son and the Holy Spirit,**

*Beginning of sacrament in triune
name of God*

I consecrate

Act

bread and wine for Holy Communion

*Natural elements, the sacramental means,
are named*

**and lay thereupon the once brought,
eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ.**

Current realization of Christ's sacrifice

For the Lord

Remembrance of the event

took bread and wine,

Reference to natural elements

gave thanks and said:

Thanks to God – as with the feast of the Passover

This is My body which is broken for you.

Participation in His life

This is My blood of the new covenant

Presence of Christ's sacrifice

given for many for the remission of sins.

*Reference to Christ's sacrifice as the basis for
the forgiveness of sins (from Matthew 26:28)*

Eat and drink!

*Invitation to participate in Christ's Body –
act is remembrance of Christ and the supper
instituted by Him*

Do this in remembrance of Me.

Meal of remembrance,
remembrance of His bitter
suffering but also of His promise

**For as often as you eat this bread
and drink this wine,**

The necessity of repeating this meal of
fellowship

you proclaim the Lord's death

Meal of confession

till He comes.

Eschatological meal

Amen!

Confirmation of the previously said

The consecration text covers all fundamental aspects of Holy Communion, namely:

- Remembrance of the event
- Presence of Christ's sacrifice
- Meal of remembrance - remembrance of His bitter suffering but also of His promise
- Meal of fellowship which should take place repeatedly
- Meal of confession - confession of the Lord's death
- Eschatological meal - reference to His return

Serving of body and blood of Christ to officiant and ministers

The officiant takes a chalice into his hand and serves himself Holy Communion.

The congregation remains standing until the ministers at the altar have received Holy Communion from the officiant. This also applies to those ministers who are not seated at the altar. This can be accompanied by the organ, a vocal piece, or instrumental. Adjustments may be necessary during larger services for pragmatic reasons. The organist should receive Holy Communion after the ministers.

That the ministers receive Holy Communion before the congregation is an expression of the presence of the Apostle through the ministers commissioned by him. The element in the ministerial body that conveys salvation becomes evident.

Announcement of musical contributions during celebration of Holy Communion

Once the officiant has returned to the altar and replaced the chalice, the congregation sits down. The officiant then announces the musical contributions during the celebration of Holy Communion.

Silence should initially follow this announcement. The officiant waits with the further acts until the members are in anticipation of Holy Communion.

Invitation to Holy Communion

After the body and blood of Christ have been served to the ministers, the hymn announced, and a moment of silence, the congregation is invited with approximately the following words: *“The Lord now invites you to Holy Communion.”* If appropriate, this can be followed in special divine services by an invitation to guests who wish to participate in Holy Communion. The following words can be used: *“Invited are all baptized souls who confess Jesus Christ as the Lord, His death, His resurrection, and His return.”*

The officiant at the altar then hands over the chalices to the ministers who are to serve communion. The communion hymn or musical piece to accompany Holy Communion should only commence after the chalices have been handed out. It is also possible to play soft instrumental music while the congregation is receiving Holy Communion, and sing a song together once everyone is seated.

In divine services with many participants, handing out of the numerous chalices can be organized differently, e.g. accompanied by music.

Permanently authorized to participate are sealed members, adopted members, and those who have received the New Apostolic baptism. Guests baptized in accordance with the rites (with water and in the triune name of God) are permitted to participate. Those who have not been baptized have no access to Holy Communion. However, no one should be prevented from participating.

Handing out the communion chalices

The inner composure of the minister with regard to Holy Communion should also be reflected in the outer attitude. This also concerns the handling of the communion chalices. A chalice is not an ordinary vessel and must therefore be handled worthily. The priestly ministers should confer dignity to the act through the manner in which they handle the chalice.



Photo on left: Example of appropriate handing out of a chalice.



Photo on right: When serving communion, the chalice is held by its base.

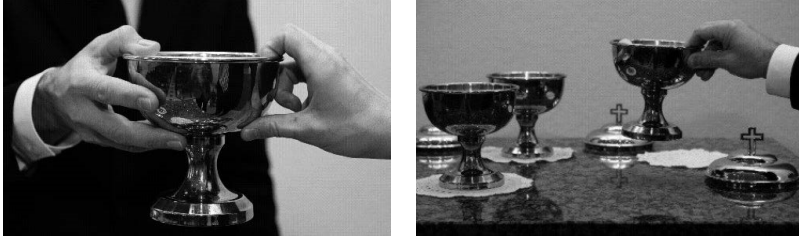


Photo on left: Example of appropriate handing out of a flat chalice.



Photo on right: The flat chalice should be held by the minister in his flat hand.

The following photos show examples of how communion chalices should **not** be held.



Serving of Holy Communion

The wafers are served with the words: *“The body and blood of Jesus given for you!”*

Adults with small children who cannot take the wafer for themselves are served with the words: *“The body and blood of Jesus given for you and your child!”*

The manner in which the wafers are served should underline the presence of our Savior Jesus Christ. The wafer should therefore be served in awareness and accentuated. Holy Communion should be an extremely solemn feast.

Serving of the body and blood of Christ must never take place under time pressure. When serving Holy Communion, everything must be avoided which could disturb the receiver in their devotion or is contrary to the holiness of the sacrament.



Photos on left and right: The wafer is held between thumb and index finger.

The following photos show examples of how the wafer should **not** be served.



Both photos: The minister's hand or thumb hides the wafer when placing into the member's hand.

Both photos: Holding of the chalice (or the flat chalice) as shown is also inappropriate.

The altar should remain occupied by a minister (a deacon, if necessary) during celebration of Holy Communion since the personal presence of the Apostle through the minister commissioned by him becomes visible.

Serving of Holy Communion is only complete when the last member has received Holy Communion and has taken the wafer.

Replacement of lids on the chalices

The lids should only be replaced on the chalices by the minister standing at the altar when all of them have been returned to their position and all musical contributions during celebration of Holy Communion have been completed. Replacement of lids on the chalices is also an act perceivable for the congregation just like uncovering of the chalices. If communion for the departed also takes place, the chalices present on the altar remain open until the end of this act.

Note that the chalices should be returned behind the altar to the minister standing there, and not across the altar.

Further acts, and completion of divine service

The Chief Apostle, District Apostle, or a commissioned Apostle now dispenses Holy Communion and possibly the other sacraments for the departed. These acts should be commenced and terminated by a musical contribution. The lids are only replaced on the chalices when the last musical contribution has been completed. The congregation remains seated during the first musical selection and stands before the officiant dispenses the sacraments. They remain standing during the second hymn.

Further ministrations or ordinations then follow. A musical contribution can also be made. The congregation is seated in this case.

The service is completed by the closing prayer and benediction. The officiant closes the Bible.

Closing prayer

This can include the following contents:

- Thanks for the word and grace received
- Thanks for experiencing the divine service
- Petition for God's protection, help and accompaniment
- Petition for blessing of the material offerings, of everything done in the work of God, and of those bringing the offerings
- Petition for the Lord's return

The closing prayer is completed by only the officiant's "*Amen.*" The congregation stands during the closing prayer.

Benediction

The closing prayer is followed by a separate liturgical part: the benediction. The wording is: *“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all! Amen”* (2 Corinthians 13:13).

The benediction is followed by the liturgical threefold *“Amen”* sung by the congregation. The benediction should be bestowed with extended arms (gesture of blessing). The palms should point toward the congregation.



Photos on left and right: Gesture when bestowing the benediction.

Final musical contribution (compulsory)

The benediction should be followed by a final musical contribution, which can be congregational singing.

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VOLUME 2

Special Types of Services

Introduction

This document describes the various alternative forms of services that may be conducted within the congregations of the New Apostolic Church-USA. It reflects the guidelines of the New Apostolic Church International (NACI) but has been modified to accommodate the specific needs and circumstances of the USA congregations as per the flexibility given each District Apostle within the New Apostolic Church by NACI.

There are two forms of divine service in the New Apostolic Church: the divine service [with dispensation of sacrament(s)] and the word service [without dispensation of sacraments]. This document presents the sequences in these various types of services.

Divine service

Divine service with sacramental acts

The focal points of the divine service with dispensation of sacrament(s) are proclamation of the word and administration of sacraments. Conducting a divine service with sacramental acts requires a priestly ministry. All information concerning the sequence of a divine service is already present in the special issue *Liturgy of the Divine Services in the New Apostolic Church – Volume 1*. Dispensation of sacraments as well as confirmation and adoption are carried out in a divine service.

Word service

Includes:

- Divine service without sacramental acts
- Funeral service
- Wedding service

Can also be used for:

- Youth service
- Senior service
- Children service
- Singles service

The word service has one focal point: proclamation of the word. Celebration of Holy Communion, and or additional administration of sacraments do not take place. Word services can be held for ministrations to and soul-care of certain circles or for special occasions (e.g. divine service for seniors). Only those who bear a spiritual ministry are authorized to conduct a word service; this also includes deacons.

If a priestly minister is unavailable, deacons can conduct word services at the regular time of a divine service. This should not take place without previous agreement with the Deacon concerned and the responsible apostle. If the priestly minister unexpectedly does not arrive for the divine service, a deacon should conduct a word service.

Acts of blessing may be carried out by a priestly minister in divine services as well as in word services. Although a deacon can dispense the benediction, he may not carry out any further acts of blessing.

In a word service, there are no Holy Communion chalices on the altar. The officiant stands behind the altar during the service.

The word service has the following sequence:

- **Opening invocation** (pause in speaking)
- **Opening prayer**
- **Reading of specified Bible text**
- **Hymn** (choir or congregation hymn)
- **Sermon based on the Divine Service Guide**
- **Musical contribution when calling assistant**
- **Continuation of sermon** (optional)
- **Musical contribution following the sermon** (optional)
- **Introductory words prior to the Lord's Prayer**
- **Lord's Prayer**
- **Closing prayer**
- **Trinitarian benediction**
- **Threefold "Amen" sung by congregation**
- **Final musical contribution**

If requested or necessary, deacons may conduct the sermon by reading the "Elaboration" section for the particular day in the Divine Service Guide. The word service should not last longer than 45 minutes.

Word service with "the receiving of Holy Communion"

If it can be expected that divine services will not take place over a longer period, and that only word services can be held by deacons, the Apostle can decree that "the receiving of Holy Communion" can be made possible at appropriate intervals. Since a priestly minister is not present, only the receiving and partaking of consecrated wafers (communion) takes place. Further information can be found later under **Prayer service with receiving of Holy Communion** (page 38).

Divine service for the departed

Divine service with intercessory prayer

The sequence of a divine service for the departed corresponds to that of a divine service with dispensation of sacrament(s). Following the celebration of Holy Communion, the congregation is prepared for an intercessory prayer for the souls of the departed. This can have the following content:

Thanksgiving

- that, through Jesus' sacrifice, unredeemed souls in the beyond can also receive grace and salvation
- that the souls are now united in fellowship with Jesus Christ and His congregation through receipt of the sacraments and are strengthened therein
- that access to the kingdom of God and to eternal life is also open to them

Intercession for unredeemed souls

- that they may receive strength to approach the Lord with trust and in humility and not be kept back by anything
- that they may have a longing for God's mercy and the sacraments
- that God may grant them all His love and attention

Administration of the sacraments for the departed

Administration of the sacraments for the departed takes place in divine services held by the Chief Apostle and the District Apostles or by Apostles commissioned by them. If the sacraments are administered, the Holy Communion chalices on the altar remain uncovered until these acts are completed.

The intercessory prayer as well as administration of sacraments should be introduced and concluded by musical contributions. The two ministers who receive the sacraments as proxies for the departed souls step forward before the preliminary musical contribution and remain standing with the officiant until the end of the concluding musical contribution.

Following the preliminary musical contribution and the introductory words of the officiant, the congregation is asked to rise for the subsequent administration of sacraments. The officiant takes the sacramental vessel and carries out the respective sacramental act. The congregation remains standing for the concluding musical contribution and the replacing of the lids on the chalices.

Additional acts may follow or the divine service is concluded with the closing prayer and the benediction.

Dedication service

Divine service with dedication of a church / place of worship

A dedication should be performed if a church or other place of worship is continuously used for divine services and where the altar is in a permanent place. This can take place at the time of a regularly scheduled divine service or at another time. As a rule, a dedication should be conducted by the responsible Apostle or Bishop. The Apostle may delegate the dedication to other priestly ministries.

The sequence of a dedication service follows the liturgy of a divine service including celebration of Holy Communion. The opening trinitarian formula and the opening prayer are followed by additional liturgical parts.

The dedication service has the following sequence:

- **Opening invocation** (pause in speaking)
- **Opening prayer**
- **Reading of Bible text** (this can also be carried out following the act of dedication)
- **Hymn** (choir or congregation hymn)
- **Introductory words of the officiant** (may also include a chronicle of local congregational history)
- **Act of dedication**

The congregation rises for this. The act of dedication commences with the opening Trinitarian formula and with the gesture of blessing (extended arms as during the benediction): *“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I dedicate this place as a house of God.”*

Followed by words to this effect:

- May the peace of the Most High dwell in this place.
- It is dedicated as a place for the work of the Holy Spirit.
- It is the place where the bridal congregation will be prepared for the return of Christ.
- May the Lord grant this place His protection and blessing.

The act of dedication is concluded with “Amen.” Eyes can remain open during the act.

- **Musical contribution**
- **Reading of Bible text** (if not already done following the opening prayer)
The congregation rises for this.
- **Possibly reading of passage from the Bible** (if the dedication takes place on a Christian holy day)
- **Remaining sequence of divine service liturgy**
- **Ratification of ministers from other congregations** (if appropriate)

Community open house supplementary to the dedication

Sometime after the dedication, a divine service can take place, specifically for community outreach. Generally, it would be best if the rector conducted this service. A brief chronicle of the congregation can also be read. Further contributions by the architect, representatives of other churches, or local officials may be included in this service following the benediction. All official speeches are made in front of the altar.

Concluding service

Divine service with decommissioning of a church / place of worship

Dedicated churches and places of worship which are no longer used should be decommissioned. Decommissioning takes place during a divine service. The final divine service should normally be conducted by the responsible Apostle or Bishop. The Apostle can delegate the decommissioning to other priestly ministers.

The rector or another minister can read from the congregation's chronicle prior to the closing prayer. The focal point can be on significant events in the congregation's history, including particularly noteworthy divine services and acts. In addition, reference can be made to the regular celebration of Holy Communion, to acts of Holy Baptism and Holy Sealing, and to ordinations which took place in the building.

Attention should be given to the fact that the congregation may experience a sense of grief in leaving this location that requires a message of comfort and encouragement. However, the message must also communicate our belief that God is leading the church according to His plan.

At the beginning or end of the chronicle, the officiant should express thanks for the wide scope of work carried out and the willingness of brothers and sisters to make sacrifices.

The ratification of ministers from the congregation can take place in the decommissioning service or in the first divine service in the new congregation. The ratification should preferably be carried out in the presence of the receiving congregation.

This is followed by the closing prayer, which should include the following points:

- Thanks that the congregation was able to gather in this building, and that it was always a place of refuge from every day cares and burdens
- Thanksgiving for the presence of the triune God in word, sacrament, and blessing
- Plea for preservation of the faith of the brothers and sisters and for their protection in their new congregation

The closing prayer is concluded by "*Amen.*" This is followed by the decommissioning with words to the following effect:

"In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I decommission this place of our worship. May the peace of God continue to guide the congregation on their way. Amen."

The decommissioning is carried out in prayer – without the gesture of blessing. This is directly followed by the benediction and the threefold "*Amen.*" If the building will continue to be used by a Christian church, the Apostle should be consulted prior to this service.

Wedding service

A wedding service is defined as a word service with the act of blessing.

It is suggested that the couple participate in our Prepare & Enrich program, if possible. The officiant should meet with the couple at least once before the wedding.

The wedding service is a separately scheduled word service. It should preferably be held in a church or at a worthy place of worship at which divine services or devotionals take place, and should not last longer than 45 minutes. Celebration of Holy Communion should not be attached to a wedding service; however, a wedding could take place after a Sunday morning divine service.

The officiant should stand in front of the altar. Following the entrance of the groom and the bride (accompanied by music), the sequence is as follows:

- **Entry of the bride and groom** (congregation stands and remains standing)
- **Opening invocation** (pause in speaking)
- **Opening prayer**
- **Reading of Bible text** (congregation can be seated after the reading)
- **Musical contribution** (optional)
- **Address to the bridal couple**
- **Marriage vows** (congregation stands and remains standing)
- **Exchange of rings, if applicable**
- **Proclamation of marriage**
- **Wedding blessing concluding with the benediction**
- **Recessional**

If a civil marriage has already been done, the sequence is the same but without the proclamation of marriage. Vows and exchange of rings may be made if desired.

Any specific, additional authorization from a state/county/etc. is the responsibility of the minister and wedding couple.

Questions put to the bridal couple prior to the wedding blessing

The questions and vows can be formulated per our tradition. See [Minister Companion](#) for some additional thoughts in the [Perspective on Weddings](#) and [Wedding Vow Alternatives](#) documents. Prior to the blessing, the bride and groom are asked by the officiant for their “Yes” or “I do.” The couple can be asked these questions individually. The questions asked of the bride and groom should have the following content:

Is the groom and the bride willing to:

- Recognize the man or woman at their side as a gift of God?
- Stand together for better or for worse and remain faithful to each other, as long as they live?
- Treat each other with love and esteem, and lead their lives according to God’s commandments?

Individual vows of the bridal couple prior to the wedding blessing

As an alternative to being asked by the officiant, the bridal couple may, prior to the blessing, take individual vows by repeating a text read to them by the officiant or by themselves:

“I, (name of the groom), recognize you, (name of the bride), as a gift from God / and vow, before God and this congregation / to love and remain faithful to you, for better or for worse. / In our marriage, I will lead my life according to the commandments of God, / look up to you with esteem, and support you – / as long as I shall live. / So help me God! Amen.”

This is followed by the corresponding vow by the bride:

“I, (name of the bride), recognize you, (name of the groom), as a gift from God / and vow, before God and this congregation / to love and remain faithful to you, for better or for worse. / In our marriage, I will lead my life according to the commandments of God, / look up to you with esteem, and support you – / as long as I shall live. / So help me God! Amen.”

Exchange of rings by the bridal couple

If the bridal couple wishes to exchange rings, the officiant asks them, after their “Yes” (or “I do”) or their vow and before the wedding blessing, to exchange the rings. No words accompany this act. Depending on local tradition, the exchange of rings can also be carried out prior to the vows or the civil marriage.

Proclamation of marriage

“Whatsoever God hath joined together, man shall not put asunder. As an ordained servant of God in the Church of Jesus Christ, and by the virtue of the authority vested in me by the state of _____, I pronounce you husband and wife, and certify your union in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

The wedding blessing

The officiant dispenses the wedding blessing by placing his hand on the extended right hands of the bridal couple and speaking words to the following effect:

“Receive the divine blessing for your matrimony in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

This is followed by further wishes using approximately the following wording:

- May God, your Father and Creator, accompany you through life and grant you protection, sustenance, and assistance.
- May God, the Son, who is your Redeemer, lead you to eternal life.
- May God, the Holy Spirit, guide you and grant you wisdom.
- May the Triune God strengthen you in your love and loyalty to each other.
- The peace of the Risen One be with you!

The wedding blessing is concluded by “Amen,” and then the benediction is proclaimed. The officiant then congratulates the newly married couple.

On the request of couples belonging to different confessions, a clergyman of the denomination of the non-New Apostolic partner can speak words of greeting and congratulations. However, a joint or additional wedding blessing does not take place. The clergyman's contribution is made after the benediction.

Generally, sacred and classical music is appropriate for weddings. The location should contribute to a holy atmosphere.

Requests for an officiant from outside the District Apostle area are not normally granted. Requests for an officiant from outside the couple's district should be approved by the local Apostle.

Funeral service

A funeral service is defined as a word service that is conducted after a person dies, according to the following guidelines.

A memorial service can be offered, if requested, only in addition to and after the funeral service has taken place. It is a word service that does not contain the surrendering of the body and the blessing.

A funeral service can take place at the cemetery, in one of our churches, at a funeral parlor, or at the home of the family. The sequence of the funeral service corresponds to that of a word service. The sequence is the same for burials or cremations. The service can take place directly prior to the interment, or on a separate occasion. A funeral service may or may not have a casket, or an urn.

The following sequence is identical for burials, cremations, funerals, and memorial services:

- **Musical contribution, if applicable**
- **Opening invocation** (pause in speaking)
- **Opening prayer**
- **Bible verse**
- **Musical contribution**
- **Short address/sermon**
- **Lord's prayer**
- **Surrendering of the body and blessing**
- **Closing prayer and benediction with three-fold amen**
- **Eulogy** (optional – could be done before the invocation or after the benediction)
- **Musical contribution, if applicable**

The sermon may include references to the departed soul's life and a short biography may be read. Following the sermon, the surrendering of the body and the blessing take place. Both can be carried out at the interment because the words with which the body is surrendered can be associated with the visible act. If a minister cannot be present at the interment or in the case that there is no body to inter (e.g. in the case of missing persons, death abroad, or donation of the body for scientific purposes), the surrendering of the body and the blessing take place during the funeral service.

The liturgical text for surrendering of the body is:

“We now return the body to the earth: Earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes. Soul and spirit, however, we commend to the love of Jesus Christ who shall guard over it until the resurrection to eternal life.”

This formulation applies to funerals of all types. The blessing is administered directly after this with the gesture of blessing (extended arms):

“The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore. Amen” (Psalm 121: 8).

This is **preceded** by the Lord’s Prayer. Holy Communion is not celebrated. This is followed by the closing prayer and benediction. The funeral service itself is concluded with the threefold “Amen” sung by the congregation.

For the prayers and the surrendering of the body, the congregation stands. For the congregational singing, it will follow the officiant’s lead.

Eulogies, which are common in certain regions, can be incorporated into the funeral service, following the benediction. If necessary, an appropriate lectern should be provided.

The address to the mourners can have the following contents:

- We are all sheltered through God’s grace
- We can hope for Christ’s return, the resurrection of the dead, and the expectation of seeing each other again
- Eternal life

During the divine service, retired ministers may be called to assist only as an exception (specifically, if there are no active ministers that knew the decedent) and with the prior approval of the apostle. If retired ministers would like to speak to the memory of the decedent, they may do so during the time of the eulogy.

When military honors are given, this could take place before or after the service or at the grave side.

Ministration visit

Administration of sacraments and/or act of blessing at a location or time other than a divine service

A ministration visit is understood to be the administration of sacraments or acts of blessing at home. This is carried out by priestly ministries. A principle of the ministration visit is that it is carried out as far as possible in the sequence usual in divine services.

If sacraments are administered, this is done in a form corresponding to the liturgy of a divine service. All formulations should be used as in divine services. If acts of blessing are carried out, this is also done in a manner similar to that in a divine service, where either the sequence of a divine service or word service should be chosen.

The ministration visit begins with an address that (e.g. when visiting the sick) can include a few thoughts from the sermon in the last divine service. The address takes the place of the sermon of a divine service.

Sequence of ministration visit with dispensation of sacraments

The address, the opening trinitarian formula, and the opening prayer (which is concluded by “*Amen*”) are followed by the Lord’s Prayer, the absolution, and the Eucharistic prayer. This is then followed by Holy Baptism or Holy Sealing. Holy Communion is subsequently celebrated in the usual manner, including the visible uncovering of the chalice. The ministration visit is concluded by the closing prayer and benediction.

Summary of sequence:

- **Address**
- **Opening invocation** (pause in speaking)
- **Opening prayer**
- **Short preparation for sacrament part, if applicable**
- **Lord’s Prayer**
- **Absolution**
- **Eucharistic prayer**
- **Holy Baptism / Holy Sealing, if applicable**
- **Celebration of Holy Communion**
- **Closing prayer / benediction**

Those present answer with a single “*Amen.*”

By exception, if a dignified celebration of Holy Communion is not possible because of the environment (e.g. a hospital room), the opening prayer can be directly followed by the absolution, and a previously consecrated wafer can be served with the normal wording. The closing prayer and benediction then complete the ministration visit. By exception, if, because of the setting, it is not even possible to pray, the sacramental part of the ministration visit can be limited to proclamation of the absolution and serving of the consecrated wafer. Consecrated wafers can be taken for such cases from the open chalices after Holy Communion in a divine service, or separately consecrated for this purpose.

Sequence of ministration visit with acts of blessing

The address, the opening Trinitarian formula, and the opening prayer (which is concluded by “*Amen*”) are followed by the act of blessing (prenatal blessing, wedding, wedding anniversary). The ministration visit is concluded by the closing prayer and benediction.

If the recipient wishes, acts of blessing can be accompanied by celebration of Holy Communion.

Summary of sequence:

- **Address**
- **Opening invocation** (pause in speaking)
- **Opening prayer**
- **Short preparation for sacrament part or act of blessing, if applicable**

- Lord's Prayer, if applicable
- Absolution, if applicable
- Eucharistic prayer, if applicable
- Holy Baptism / Holy Sealing, if applicable
- Holy Communion, if applicable
- Act of blessing
- Greeting word / prayer / good wishes by clergyman of a different confession, if applicable
- Closing prayer / benediction

Those present answer with a single "Amen."

Prayer service

Liturgical celebration conducted by non-minister

This should only be used in a very rare circumstance with approval from the local apostle.

Where divine services can only take place sporadically or when, for a longer period of time, no priestly minister is able to conduct divine services, this can be compensated by word services conducted by deacons (see **Word Service**, page 26).

However, if no ministers are available, non-ordained brothers and sisters may conduct "prayer services" that follow a fixed liturgical form. These "prayer services" are intended to ensure that members of a congregation do not suffer through the absence of spiritual food and fellowship. For this reason, prayer services should preferably take place in the location where divine services are usually conducted. Thus, a "prayer service" differs from other devotionals, which are carried out by ministers or laypersons on special occasions and have no fixed form (see **Devotional**, page 38).

If it is necessary to conduct prayer services, the Apostle or a minister commissioned by him for this purpose can commission (e.g. in a divine service, by phone, or by letter) a brother or sister for this ministration for a limited period of time. Just like a divine service, a prayer service is open to all and should last about 30 minutes.

Form of prayer service

If an altar is present in the place of worship, it should be prepared as for a divine service, but without Holy Communion chalices. The person conducting the prayer service may stand or sit in front of the altar (if present) during the entire prayer service. If only a few people are present, chairs can be arranged in a circle for the prayer service. All participants stand for prayers and hymns.

Beginning of prayer service

If possible, a joint hymn should be sung. The prayer service **does not** start with the opening Trinitarian formula, but with a freely spoken prayer by the person conducting the prayer service, with devotion to the Triune God as part of the prayer.

The prayer can include:

- Praise of God
- Thanks for protection, help, and grace granted
- Plea for divine peace
- Plea for the strengthening of fellowship
- Plea for connection to the apostle ministry
- Intercession for brothers and sisters who cannot be present
- Plea for holiness and undisturbed peace during the prayer service.

A further joint hymn or choir hymn can then follow, if appropriate. This is followed by the reading of a Bible text specified by the Apostle.

Reading of a text provided by the Apostle then follows (maximum 15 minutes). The reading of this text does not conclude with “*Amen*” because it is not a sermon preached by a minister in the context of a divine service. If references to biblical texts are included, these should be read aloud from Scripture. A further joint hymn or choir hymn can then follow, if possible. As part of the prayer service, participants can be given the opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts concerning the text that was read (about 15 minutes).

Conclusion of prayer service

The Lord’s Prayer is spoken at the end of the prayer service. The person conducting the prayer service, as well as all other participants, may look toward the altar (if present). This is followed by a joint hymn, if possible. The prayer service is concluded by a freely spoken prayer, which can have the following content:

- Thanks for word and fellowship in the prayer service
- Intercession for bearers of blessing, brothers and sisters, those in need, and the sick
- Plea for the possibility to participate in the next divine service / prayer service
- Plea for the shortening of the time until Christ’s return
- Plea to be accepted upon Christ’s return
- Plea for blessing of the offerings and of those who brought them
- Plea for God’s blessing, protection and peace, for His help and attendance

The person conducting the prayer service looks toward the congregation while praying, and concludes the prayer with “*Amen*.” The congregation responds with a single “*Amen*.” This is followed by a final hymn sung by the congregation or choir (if possible).

Prayer service with receiving of Holy Communion

If it can be expected that divine services will not take place over a longer period, and that only word services can be held by deacons or prayer services by non-ministers, the Apostle can decree that “receiving of Holy Communion” can be made possible for the participants at prayer services at appropriate intervals. This is applied if there are no other possibilities for the celebration of Holy Communion.*

Such prayer services with Holy Communion are conducted based on the practice of soul-care letters. The forgiveness of sins and the celebration of Holy Communion are effective. In this case, we primarily trust in God in His omnipotence and grace. Furthermore, this can be found in the authority assigned to the apostle ministry by Jesus Christ. The origin must always be the apostle who is responsible for the proclamation of the forgiveness of sins and arranges this celebration of Holy Communion.

The congregation gathered for the prayer service receives a soul-care letter with consecrated wafers. The intended use should be known when consecrating the wafers. After praying the Lord’s Prayer together, the person conducting the prayer service reads the absolution from the soul-care letter. The person conducting the prayer service opens the Holy Communion chalice in which the consecrated wafers are found.

He subsequently reads the words in the soul-care letter for receipt of the wafers: *“Receive in the consecrated wafers the body and blood of Jesus which is given for you. Amen.”* The congregation answers with *“Amen.”* This should clearly indicate that the giver is the apostle.

The participants individually take the wafers out of the chalice. This is then followed by the conclusion described for a prayer service.

If Holy Communion takes place in a word service, it follows the same sequence.

** The full effect of Holy Communion takes place when we receive the duly consecrated wafer from the hands of an Apostle, or a minister commissioned by him, in the presence of the congregation. Thus, it should be noted that the partaking of Holy Communion as described here is of value, but remains deficient as it lacks all the necessary elements.*

Devotional

Gathering related to a particular event, but without liturgical form

A worship evening, group devotional, and/or small group discussion falls under the category of a devotional.

A distinction must be made between devotionals and prayer services. Possible occasions for devotionals could be church holidays or social events, but also memorial days or catastrophes. For example, devotionals can be held on Christmas Eve or Maundy Thursday (the institution of Holy Communion). Devotionals can also be used for evangelizing or for fellowship with other confessions. The devotional therefore always has a Christian content.

A devotional has no liturgical form. It is therefore not a special type of divine service. The presence of ministers is not necessary when conducting a devotional. Its sequence is determined by the person conducting it. A devotional is not conducted from the altar. There is no proclamation of the word as in a divine service and no dispensation of sacraments or acts of blessing. However, a devotional begins and concludes with a prayer. There is no opening Trinitarian formula and no benediction.

If the devotional is to be held in one of our church buildings, it must first be approved by the rector. Its form must be in keeping with the holiness of God's house.

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VOLUME 3

Dispensation of sacraments
and acts of blessing

Holy Baptism with water

Note: The responsibility the parents assume at Holy Baptism should be discussed at a preliminary meeting between the parents and the officiant before the baptism takes place. The same preliminary meeting should also be conducted for adults being baptized.

Liturgical position

Holy Baptism with water takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, and can be introduced with a piece of music. If several acts are planned before Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following order:

- Holy Baptism with water
- Adoption
- Holy Sealing
- Confirmation

Execution

The dispensation of Holy Baptism with water is performed by a priestly minister or an apostle. The holy act takes place in front of the altar.

Address

The following content is recommended.

Baptism of children

In the event that persons other than the parents are to assume responsibility for the religious upbringing of the child, the following address should be directed to these guardians.

- Children are a gift from God and should be valued as such ([Psalm 127:3](#)).
- Parents bear responsibility for the child's upbringing in the Christian faith - as it is proclaimed in the New Apostolic Church.
- Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental act of grace of the triune God bestowed upon a human being ([Mark 16:16](#)).
- Through baptism, original sin is washed away ([1 Peter 3:21](#)).
- The person being baptized will now be incorporated into the church of Christ.

Baptism of adults

This also includes older children who take on responsibility for themselves. In this case, the child's legal guardians must have declared their consent in writing beforehand.

- Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental act of grace of the triune God bestowed upon a human being ([Mark 16:16](#)).
- Through baptism, original sin is washed away ([1 Peter 3:21](#)).
- The person being baptized will now be incorporated into the church of Christ.
- The prerequisite for receiving Holy Baptism with water is profession of the New Apostolic belief in

- the triune God;
- the death, resurrection, and the return of Jesus Christ;
- the effectiveness of the apostle ministry in
 - o dispensing the sacraments,
 - o proclaiming the word of God,
 - o preparing for the return of Jesus Christ to take home His bride.

The baptismal vow

The officiant asks the congregation to rise.

Baptism of children

“Dear parents, I now ask you before God and the congregation: Do you believe in Jesus Christ and is it your wish

- to raise your child in the New Apostolic faith (if both parents are New Apostolic) alternatively:
- to raise your child in the New Apostolic faith and support his/her spiritual upbringing in this faith (if only one parent is New Apostolic)

and to teach him/her to remain faithful to the Lord? Then vow this with a clear ‘Yes.’”

Baptism of adults

“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Do you profess the gospel of Jesus Christ? Is it your wish to follow Jesus Christ and allow yourself to be prepared to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit through the word of God? Then vow this with a clear ‘Yes.’”

Prayer following the vow

Baptism of children

The prayer should contain the following elements:

- God has heard the vow of the parents, who have requested that their child receive the sacrament of Holy Baptism with water;
- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow;
- the plea that the parents may have the strength and the ability to keep their vow;

Baptism of adults

The prayer should contain the following elements:

- God has heard this vow and the request for the dispensation of the sacrament of Holy Baptism with water;
- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow;
- the plea for strength and the ability to keep this vow;

The prayer is concluded with *“Amen.”*

Consecration of the baptismal water

The minister holds his hand over the water to be used in the baptism and consecrates it with the following words: *“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I consecrate this water and dedicate it for the act of Holy Baptism. Amen.”*

Act of baptism

Following is the trinitarian baptismal formula: *“(In the case of children, this is to be preceded by the child’s first name) ..., I baptize you in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”*

As the officiant speaks the words of the baptismal formula, he makes the sign of the cross three times on the forehead of the person being baptized, after having dipped his fingers into the consecrated water each time. The officiant should make sure that he uses enough water.

The aforementioned baptismal formula and corresponding actions are repeated for each person being baptized.

The officiant then places his hand on the forehead of the person being baptized and states the following: *“Through this holy act, God washes away original sin. You are now incorporated into the body of Christ and thus into the church of Christ.”*

This is immediately followed by the baptismal blessing.

Baptismal blessing

The baptismal blessing is dispensed under laying on of hands. The following content is recommended.

God, the Father

- imparts to you His grace and leads you upon the path to salvation and complete redemption.
- accepts you in His love.

Jesus Christ

- has sacrificed His life for you.
- grants you access to Holy Communion and all the blessings in the house of God.
- grants you His peace.

The Holy Spirit

- desires to form and shape you in accordance with the nature of Christ.
- protect you on your path of life and faith.

Mandatory conclusion

The baptismal blessing is concluded with the following formula:

“May the blessing of God accompany you. The peace of the Risen One be with you. Amen!”

After the officiant has offered his congratulations to the baptized/the parents, they return to their seats.

Introduction of Holy Communion

If no other acts or musical contributions are planned, the congregation remains standing, and the celebration of Holy Communion follows.

Adoption into the congregation

Note: Before the act of adoption, preparatory talks should take place in which the New Apostolic Creed is discussed and explained (THRIVE booklet, or *The Basics* or *We believe* small group curriculum could be used in addition).

Liturgical position

The adoption takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, and can be introduced with a musical contribution. If several acts are planned before Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following order:

- Holy Baptism with water
- Adoption
- Holy Sealing
- Confirmation

Execution

As a rule, adoptions are performed by priestly ministers. The act takes place in front of the altar.

Address

(Children who assume responsibility for themselves can also be adopted. In this case, their legal guardians should have declared their consent in writing beforehand.)

The following content is recommended.

- Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental act of grace of God.
- All people who are baptized, who believe in Christ, and who profess Him as their Lord are part of the church of Christ.
- The prerequisites for adoption are faith and the declaration of belief that
 - Jesus Christ will return to take home His bride.
 - The apostles have been sent in order to prepare the bridal congregation for the return of Christ.
 - The gift of the Holy Spirit is received through Holy Sealing.
- The adoption gives the believer permanent access to Holy Communion.

The adoption vow

The officiant asks the congregation to rise. *“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Do you profess the New Apostolic faith, and is it your wish to follow Jesus Christ and be prepared to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit through the word of God? Then vow this with a clear ‘Yes.’”*

Prayer following the vow

The prayer should contain the following elements:

- God has heard the vow of this brother/sister who has asked to be adopted into the congregation.
- the plea for God's blessing upon this vow.
- the plea for the strength and ability to keep this vow.

The prayer is concluded with "Amen."

Act of adoption

The officiant carries out this act with the following words: *"In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I adopt you into the fellowship of profession and communion of the New Apostolic Church. You now have permanent access to Holy Communion and the blessings of the house of God."*

Further blessings may also be expressed.

- May the triune God strengthen your faith and keep you in following Jesus Christ.
- May the blessing of God accompany you, and the peace of the Risen One be with you.

The act is concluded with "Amen."

After the officiant has offered his congratulations to the adopted members, they return to their seats.

Introduction of Holy Communion

If no other acts or musical contributions are planned, the congregation remains standing, and the celebration of Holy Communion follows.

Confirmation

Note: Prior to the confirmation day, meet with the confirmand(s) to walk through the divine service procedures, urge them to be attentive to the sermon as the Lord is talking directly to them, practice reciting the vow, and pray together.

Liturgical position

The Confirmation DSG and associated Bible verse should be used as the basis for all confirmation services. The DSG that is scheduled for the Sunday that confirmation falls on can be used as a pre-thought or in preparation for Holy Communion if applicable.

The act of confirmation occurs after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer. As a rule, no further acts take place in confirmation services, other than confirmation and Holy Communion. If there are other youth (8th-12th graders) in the congregation, consider arranging ahead of time for them to join the confirmands in front of the altar and loosely surround them as a symbol of support.

Execution

Confirmations are performed during Eastertide (i.e. the five Sundays after Easter Sunday) by a priestly minister or an apostle. The act can take place either in front of, or beside, the altar.

At the conclusion of the Eucharistic prayer, the confirmands are invited to come to the front of the altar. A musical selection is optional, in consideration of the number of confirmands. The officiant, or a brother or sister appointed by him, reads out the letter from the Chief Apostle, which is later handed out.

Address

The following content is recommended. The confirmands:

- assume responsibility for their life of faith.
- publicly profess the New Apostolic faith as it is expressed in the Creed.
- promise to remain faithful to the triune God.
- receive the blessing of God to help them keep their vow of faithfulness.
- are to actively engage themselves in congregational life with their gifts and talents.

Request for “Yes” and the confirmation vow

The officiant asks the congregation to rise. *“I now ask you in the presence of God and the congregation: Do you profess the New Apostolic faith as it comes to expression in the Creed? Are you willing to align your lives with Jesus Christ and to be prepared for His return? If this is the case, then vow it with a clear ‘Yes.’”*

The officiant then thanks the confirmands for their ‘Yes,’ and asks them to give their confirmation vow: *“I renounce Satan and all his work and ways, and surrender myself to You, O triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in belief, obedience, and the earnest resolution to remain faithful to You until my end. Amen.”*

(If there is only one confirmand, the minister could join them in reciting the vow.)

Prayer for God’s blessing

In a brief prayer, the officiant asks God for His blessing. The prayer is concluded with “Amen.”

Dispensation of blessing

The confirmands and congregation continue standing. The confirmation blessing is dispensed by laying on of hands with the following words: *“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the blessing on your confirmation.”*

The following is recommended as further content:

God, the Father

- has chosen you from eternity to be His children.
- give you the strength to keep your confirmation vow.
- go with you upon your future path of faith and life.

Jesus Christ

- preserve you in God's work of redemption.
- grant you the strength to follow and serve.
- prepare you for His return.

The Holy Spirit

- cause you to grow in the virtues of Jesus Christ.
- awaken the right thoughts and give you wisdom as you make decisions in life.
- develop and magnify the gifts in you to serve others in the mind of Jesus Christ.

Mandatory conclusion

"May the blessing of God accompany you. The peace of the Risen One be with you. Amen!"

The officiant congratulates the confirmands and welcomes them into the congregation as self-responsible Christians. The congregation remains standing.

After the officiant has offered his congratulations, the confirmands return to their seats, and the officiant returns to the altar.

Introduction of Holy Communion

This is followed by the celebration of Holy Communion. *"And now we shall celebrate Holy Communion."*

After the Conclusion of the divine service

After the divine service is completed with the three-fold amen, the confirmands can be assembled in front of the altar, introduced by name, and presented with the gift from the District Apostle and Apostles. A group photo can be taken at this time, not *during the blessing*. The members are then invited to greet them and welcome each one into the congregation.

Note regarding confirmation offerings: We no longer separate confirmation offerings nor count them separately. They are put into the offering box as normal. We can call attention to this special offering during the final prayer when we normally remember the offerings.

Blessings on wedding anniversaries

In accordance with [Catechism 12.2.3.2 Blessing at wedding anniversaries](#)

Liturgical position

The dispensation of a wedding anniversary blessing takes place after the celebration of Holy Communion.

If several acts are planned after Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following order:

- relieving a minister of an appointment, retirement;
- ordination, appointment, reinstatement;
- engagement, wedding, wedding anniversary.

An anniversary blessing may be performed outside the context of the divine service (e.g. in the sacristy or at a location of the couple's choosing).

Execution

The dispensation of a wedding anniversary blessing is performed by a priestly minister or an apostle. It is preferred that the act take place in front of the altar; it can also take place at the seat of the anniversary couple if necessary.

A piece of music is usually performed as an introduction to this act.

Address

The following content is recommended.

A look back in retrospect:

- praise and thanksgiving for divine protection and help;
- where appropriate, special events in the couple's matrimony;
- where appropriate, the work the couple has performed in the congregation/district.

The present:

- praise and thanksgiving for God's grace;
- joy over the wedding anniversary;
- where appropriate, special characteristics of both spouses.

A look ahead:

- trust in the continuing help of God;
- where appropriate, share a Bible text with some brief comments.

Prayer for God's blessing

The officiant asks the congregation to rise. In a brief prayer, he asks God for a blessing upon the anniversary couple. The prayer is concluded with "Amen."

Dispensation of blessing

The anniversary couple is asked to join their right hands. The officiant places his hand on top of the hands of the couple and dispenses the blessing with the following words:

"In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the blessing of God on your _____ wedding anniversary." (The wedding anniversary is to be specified here, for example, "... on your **silver** wedding anniversary.")

The following is recommended as further content.

God the Father

- has brought you together in His love.
- has protected you over the past years.
- grant you the strength to bear burdens.
- bless your matrimonial bond anew.

Jesus Christ

- loves you and has sacrificed His life for you.
- accompany you in the future.
- help you in all circumstances.

The Holy Spirit

- guide your thoughts in all decisions of life.
- awaken good thoughts within you so that you may bring each other joy.
- prepare you for the return of Jesus Christ.

Mandatory conclusion

“May the blessing of God accompany you. The peace of the Risen One be with you. Amen!”

Transition to closing prayer

After the officiant has congratulated the couple, a piece of music may follow. If this is the case, the congregation takes a seat. Otherwise the congregation remains standing and the closing prayer follows.

Prenatal blessing

Liturgical position

The dispensation of the prenatal blessing occurs outside of the divine service in the course of a pastoral care visit.

Execution

The prenatal blessing is dispensed by a priestly minister or an apostle. The prerequisite is that the pregnancy has been confirmed by a medical diagnosis.

Address

The parents or the mother should be prepared for the act prior to the dispensation of the blessing. The following content is recommended (See also [Catechism 12.2.1](#)).

- Parents experience pregnancy and the birth of a child as a special phase of life.
- Right from the start, the parents are responsible for this new life together.

- A prenatal blessing is dispensed as the first visible act of God upon a human being. This act of blessing is imparted to the mother at her request. Thereby God strengthens the mother in her endeavor to foster and care for her child in terms of its faith during its prenatal development. This blessing will also benefit the soul of the unborn child and impart to the mother the certainty that both she and her child are secure in the hand of the Lord.
- For as long as the child develops within the mother's womb, it is connected to her in all things. It not only absorbs that which the mother supplies to her body, but the soul of the child is also influenced by everything the mother feels and experiences. Thus, the mother can contribute to the prenatal care of her child in a manner pleasing to God through prayer and by consciously involving the developing child in her life of faith.
- The prenatal blessing is not associated with the promise of a problem-free pregnancy or the birth of a healthy child.

Prayer

The minister asks those present to rise, and begins the dispensation of the blessing in prayer in the name of the Triune God, with the invocation, *"In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."* He gives thanks to God for the developing new life and asks Him to provide the prenatal blessing requested by the parents or the mother. The prayer is closed with *"Amen."*

Dispensation of blessing

The minister dispenses the prenatal blessing under laying on of hands upon the forehead of the mother, and speaks the following words:

"Receive the prenatal blessing in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

This can be followed by statements with the following content.

- God has granted a new life, which is now developing within the mother.
- God promises His fatherly protection to the child and the mother during the pregnancy.
- May the peace of Jesus Christ accompany both mother and child during the pregnancy.
- May the Holy Spirit foster
 - the abilities of the parents to care for the child both physically and spiritually.
 - the ability of the parents to create a positive family atmosphere and to impart this to the unborn child.
- May God protect and accompany mother and child at birth.

Mandatory conclusion

"May the blessing of God accompany you. The peace of the Risen One be with you. Amen!"

Closing prayer

The act of blessing concludes with a prayer and the benediction.

Notes on sacramental acts for the departed

Acts and prayers for the departed are uniformly regulated within the liturgy. The following is a follow-up to the explanations given in Volume 2 of Liturgy of the Divine Services in the New Apostolic Church, **Special Types of Divine Services** (page 28 et seq.).

- Divine service with dispensation of the sacraments for the departed: The congregation rises immediately before the sacraments are dispensed for the departed (in other words, after the address and introductory musical contribution). The congregation remains standing for the dispensation of all of the sacraments and concluding musical contribution.
- Divine service without dispensation of the sacraments for the departed: If only an intercessory prayer takes place in a divine service for the departed, the congregation rises for the intercessory prayer and then remains standing for the concluding musical contribution.
- The introductory and closing musical contributions must have an obvious and direct connection to these acts.
- The musical contributions should not exceed one-and-a-half minutes each.

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VOLUME 4

Holy acts associated with
ministry and service

As a rule, the acts described in the following are performed in front of the altar.

Appointment of a minister

Liturgical position in the divine service

Ministers can be appointed to exercise leadership functions within a District Church, a district, or a congregation.

The appointment takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- engagement blessing, marriage blessing, wedding anniversary blessing.

Execution

The appointment is performed by the Apostle or a priestly minister designated by him for this purpose.

Address

The following content is recommended.

District rector

- The district rector is responsible for several congregations in both a spiritual and an organizational respect.
- He sees to it that the gospel is preached in its purity.
- He also ensures that the necessary ministerial gifts are present in the congregations.
- He adopts guests into the congregation and presides over preparatory discussions with those who are to be sealed.
- He provides pastoral care to the congregational rectors and their families.
- He also leads discussions with those who are to receive a ministry, and ensures that the ministers make use of the training materials offered to them by the Church.

Congregational rector

- The congregational rector is responsible for one congregation - in exceptional cases, perhaps also for several congregations - in both a spiritual and organizational respect.
- He presides over preparatory discussions for Holy Baptism with water, Holy Sealing, and acts of blessing.
- By commission of the district rector, he also performs the adoption of guests.
- He provides pastoral care to the ministers in the congregation.
- He sees to it that all the available gifts in the congregation are engaged for the benefit of all.

Request for minister's consent

The officiating minister asks the congregation to rise. He then asks the minister to be appointed a question to the following effect:

(In the event the officiant is a priestly minister: *“By commission of the Apostle,”*) *“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Are you prepared to carry out your appointment as a (designation) in the (working area of ...) in faithfulness to God, in oneness with the apostolate, and in accordance with the regulations of the Church? Then vow this to God in the presence of the congregation with your ‘Yes!’”*

Prayer

The ensuing prayer is to contain an express invocation of the Holy Spirit, and should include the following:

- God has heard the “Yes” of the brother.
- the plea for God’s blessing upon this “Yes”.
- the plea for strength and the ability to keep this vow.
- the plea to God, the Holy Spirit, to grant blessing and sanctification through the appointment, as well as to accompany and strengthen the appointed minister so that he may fulfil the duties associated with the leadership of the district or congregation.

Act

The minister kneels. The officiant places his hands upon the head of the minister and appoints him with the following words:

“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the appointment to work as a district rector/congregational rector. May the triune God bless you and sanctify you in order to fulfil all the duties associated with this appointment in the mind of Jesus Christ.”

This can be followed by further blessings:

- may God awaken, strengthen, and multiply the available gifts, and impart additional powers through the blessing ([CNAC-QA 416](#)).
- may God grant you the wisdom to make clear decisions that will serve for the preservation and growth of the district (or the congregation).
- always perform your duty in love for all members of the district (or the congregation) and in oneness with your leaders.
- be a watchman over that which is entrusted to your care, such that the gospel of Jesus Christ can be spread in a manner that corresponds to the teaching of the Apostles.
- see to it that the regulations of the Church, as determined by the apostolate, are observed.

Obligatory conclusion:

“The blessing of God accompany you. The peace of the Risen One be with you. Amen.”

Assignment of a minister

Liturgical position in the divine service

An assignment is the allocation of a spiritual service to a minister.

The assignment takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- engagement blessing, marriage blessing, wedding anniversary blessing.

Execution

The assignment is performed by the Apostle or a priestly minister designated by him for this purpose.

Address

The following content is recommended.

Bishop

- The Bishop is the assistant of the Apostle and his closest collaborator. In order to fulfil his duties for the blessing of those entrusted to his care, it is indispensable for him to cultivate oneness with the apostolate.
- He acts in the commission of the Apostle and represents him in all duties that do not require the authority of the Apostle ministry.
- He is to be a wise counsellor to the district rector and congregational rectors, and serve as an example to the ministers in preaching.
- Members who need special attention are to receive sensitive pastoral care accompanied by deep prayers.

Delegate of the district rector

- The delegate of the district rector is the latter's assistant and closest collaborator. In order to perform his duties for the blessing of those entrusted to him, it is indispensable for him to cultivate oneness with his leaders.
- He acts by commission of the district rector and represents him in all duties delegated to him.

Delegate of the congregational rector

- The delegate of the congregational rector is his assistant and closest collaborator. In order to perform his duties for the blessing of those entrusted to his care, it is indispensable for him to cultivate oneness with his leaders.
- He acts by commission of the congregational rector, and represents him in all duties delegated to him.

Request for minister's consent

The officiating minister asks the congregation to rise. He now asks the minister to be assigned a question to the following effect:

(In the event the officiant is a priestly minister: *“By commission of the Apostle,” “I now ask you, before God and the congregation: are you prepared to support your Apostle/district rector/congregational rector in his leadership function in the (working area of ...), in faithfulness to God, in oneness with the apostolate, and in accordance with the regulations of the Church? Then vow this to God in the presence of the congregation with your ‘Yes!’”*

Prayer

The prayer should contain the following elements:

- the plea to the triune God to accept this “Yes” graciously and grant the minister the strength and ability to keep this vow.
- the plea for God’s blessing, strength, and guidance so that the minister may be able to fulfil the duties associated with this assignment to support the Apostle/district rector/congregational rector.

Act

The officiating minister shakes the hand of the minister to be assigned and assigns him with the following words:

“I hereby assign you as a Bishop/delegate of the district rector/delegate of the congregational rector. May the triune God bless and strengthen you such that you are able to fulfil all the duties associated with this assignment.”

- Thereafter he lists all the duties associated with the respective assignment.
- Further blessings can be added in conclusion.

Assignments are given for:	Approved by:	Executed by:
Delegate to apostle (bishop)	CA	DA
Delegate to district rector	DA - MCR	DA / AP
Delegate to rector / SLT	AP	DR
Sunday school, R.I. teacher	DR	Rector
Youth leader	DR	Rector

SLT = Shared Leadership Team; a person responsible for one of the four elements of congregational health (Culture, Pastoral Care, Divine Service Experience, and Structure).

MCR = Minister Change Request

Reinstatement of a minister

Liturgical position in the divine service

A reinstatement is necessary if a minister is to become active in another district or congregation. This act takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion.

If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- engagement blessing, marriage blessing, wedding anniversary blessing.

Execution

The reinstatement of a priestly minister or a Deacon is usually performed by the district rector (with approved MCR).

The officiant shakes the minister's hand and reinstates him with the following words:

“By commission of the Apostle, I hereby reinstate you to your ministerial mandate in the district of (...) / congregation of (...). May God also strengthen and accompany you in the future in your new working area.”

Assignment to services that are not bound to a ministry

Members or ministers who are to serve over a longer period, on either a district or congregational level, as the primarily responsible teacher - be it in Sunday School, Religious Instruction, or Confirmation Instruction - or youth leader will be assigned to these services.

Liturgical position in the divine service

The assignment of members can take place either during or following the divine service, in the presence of the congregation, or in the circle of those whom the assigned individual is to serve.

If it takes place during the divine service, it is performed following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- engagement blessing, marriage blessing, wedding anniversary blessing.

Execution

The assignment is performed by the responsible priestly minister.

Address

The following content is recommended.

Assistant to DR or Rector

- A member assigned specific tasks to assist and support the rector or district rector (e.g. minister development, finance, statistics, etc.).

Teachers (See [Catechism 12.4.1](#))

- The teacher has the task of supporting parents in raising their children in the New Apostolic faith.
- The teacher is to instruct the children using the teaching materials provided by the Church, and familiarize them with the content of the New Apostolic faith in an age-appropriate manner.
- The teacher is to support the children in developing their own personal faith. This includes teaching them to pray, to attend the divine services, and to acquaint themselves with the content of the New Apostolic faith.
- The teacher acts in consultation with and by commission of the district rector or congregational rector.

Youth leader (See [Catechism 12.4.2](#))

- The youth leader is to help the young people to deepen their New Apostolic faith, so that it may become the standard for their lifestyle.
- He/she inspires the young members to engage their gifts and abilities in both Church and society, and thereby respond to Jesus' call to love their neighbor.
- He/she is to show the young people ways to take on responsibility in the congregation, and thereby enrich and edify it.
- He/she acts in consultation with and by commission of the district rector or congregational rector.

Request for consent

The officiant asks the congregation to rise. He then asks the brother/sister to be assigned a question to the following effect:

"I now ask you before God and the congregation: Are you prepared henceforth, in humbleness and faithfulness... (choose the appropriate responsibility)

- *to assist your district rector/congregational rector?*
- *to provide pastoral care to the children?*
- *to provide pastoral care to the confirmands/young people?*

Are you prepared to serve all of the members/children/young people entrusted to your care in the love of Jesus Christ? Then vow this to God in the presence of the congregation with your 'Yes'!"

Prayer

The prayer should contain the following elements:

- the plea that the triune God may accept this “Yes” in grace, and grant the necessary strength and ability to keep this vow.
- the plea for God’s blessing, strength, and support in order to fulfil the associated duties in the district (or in the congregation).

Act

The officiant shakes the hand of the person in question and assigns him or her with the following words:

“I hereby assign you as a...

- *assistant to the district rector.*
- *assistant to the rector.*
- *Sunday School/R.I. teacher.*
- *youth leader.*

May the triune God bless and strengthen you so that you are able to fulfil all the tasks associated with this assignment.”

- Thereafter list all the duties associated with the respective assignment.
- Further blessings can be added in conclusion.

Assignments are given for:	Approved by:	Executed by:
Assistant to district rector	DA - MCR	DA / AP
Assistant to rector / SLT	AP	DR
Sunday school, R.I. teacher	DR	Rector
Youth leader	DR	Rector

SLT = Shared Leadership Team; a person responsible for one of the four elements of congregational health (Culture, Pastoral Care, Divine Service Experience, and Structure).

MCR = Minister Change Request

Termination of an appointment or assignment

Liturgical position of the termination of an appointment in the divine service

The termination of an appointment takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- engagement blessing, marriage blessing, wedding anniversary blessing.

Execution

The termination of an appointment or an assignment is performed by the Apostle or a priestly minister designated by him.

He expresses thanks to the minister in question for his service and commitment. Thereafter he shakes his hand and releases him from his appointment with words to the following effect:

(If necessary: *“By commission of the Apostle,” “I hereby release you from your appointment as a (designation) in the (working area of ...).”*)

Liturgical position of the termination of an assignment in the divine service

The termination of an assignment can take place either during or after the divine service, either in the presence of the congregation or the circle of those whom the person was assigned to serve.

If the termination of the assignment takes place during a divine service, it will be performed following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- engagement blessing, marriage blessing, wedding anniversary blessing.

Execution

The termination of an assignment is performed by the Apostle or a priestly minister designated by him.

He expresses thanks to the person in question for his/her service and commitment. He then shakes his/her hand and terminates the assignment (if necessary, by commission of the Apostle) in words to the following effect:

(If necessary: *“By commission of the Apostle,” “I hereby release you from your assignment as a (designation).”*)

Retirement of a minister

Liturgical position in the divine service

The retirement of a minister takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- engagement blessing, marriage blessing, wedding anniversary blessing.

Execution

The retirement is usually performed by the Chief Apostle, District Apostle, or Apostle.

A short address is prepared with the following recommended content:

- duration and highlights of his activity in ministry
- special characteristics of the minister
- gratitude for his commitment to the work of God
- gratitude for the support of his wife and family
- the request for continued prayers and support of the work in the congregation

He then shakes his hand and releases him (if necessary, by commission of the Apostle) from his ministerial mandate. He points out that the ministerial authority remains intact.

This occurs with words to the following effect (without the Trinitarian formula):

(If necessary, "By commission of the Apostle,") "I hereby release you from your ministerial mandate. The ministerial authority you have received will remain intact."

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