

LITURGY OF THE NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH

New Apostolic Church
2025 USA Edition



LITURGY
OF THE
NEW APOSTOLIC
CHURCH



Liturgy of the New Apostolic Church

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Introduction: general notes concerning the divine service	7
1 The divine service	11
1.1 The liturgy of the divine service (short version)	12
1.1.1 Beginning of the divine service	12
1.1.2 Sermon part	12
1.1.3 Sacramental part	13
1.1.4 Further acts	15
1.1.5 End of divine service	15
1.2 The liturgy of the divine service (long version)	16
1.2.1 Beginning of the divine service	16
1.2.2 Sermon part	18
1.2.3 Sacramental part	19
2 Special types of divine services	34
2.1 Word service	35
2.1.1 Liturgy of the word service	35
2.1.2 Word service in which Holy Communion can be taken	36
2.2 Divine service for the departed	37
2.2.1 Divine service for the departed with prayer of intercession	37
2.2.2 Divine service for the departed with dispensation of the sacraments	38
2.3 Dedication service	39
2.3.1 Divine service with dedication of a church building or divine service premises	39
2.3.2 Ceremonial act supplementary to the dedication	40
2.4 Decommissioning service	41
2.5 Wedding service	43
2.6 Funeral service	47
2.7 Dispensation of sacraments and acts of blessing outside of the divine service	50
3 Prayer service with and without liturgical form	51
3.1 Prayer service (with liturgical form)	52
3.2 Devotional (without liturgical form)	55
4 Dispensation of sacraments and acts of blessing	56
4.1 Holy Baptism with water	57
4.2 Holy Sealing	63

4.3	Holy Communion	67
4.4	Adoption into the congregation	68
4.5	Confirmation	71
4.6	Blessings on wedding anniversaries	74
4.7	Prenatal blessing	76
5	Holy acts associated with ministry and service	78
5.1	Ordination of ministers	79
5.2	Appointment of ministers	84
5.3	Assignment of ministers	88
5.4	Reinstatement of ministers	92
5.5	Assignment to services that are not bound to a spiritual ministry (teachers and youth leaders)	93
5.6	Termination	97
5.6.1	Termination of an appointment or assignment of a minister	97
5.6.2	Termination of an assignment to services that are not bound to a ministry (teachers and youth leaders)	98
5.7	Retirement of ministers	99

Liturgically binding texts are displayed *in blue italics*.

Sacraments and acts of blessing are normally performed in front of the altar.

Visit the NAC USA Member Center site for additional content.

*“But the Lord is
in His holy temple.
Let all the earth
keep silence before Him.”*

HABAKKUK 2: 20

Introduction: general notes concerning the divine service

The term “liturgy”, which derives from the ancient Greek word *leiturgia* (“public service”), denotes the prescribed sequence of the divine service, as well as the words, actions, and gestures it involves. On the one hand, the divine service constitutes God’s service upon human beings, which becomes evident in the sermon inspired by the Holy Spirit, the celebration of the sacraments, and the benediction. On the other hand, the divine service also constitutes our service to God, which is expressed in song, prayer, and profession.

The divine service has its origin in the historical self-revelation of the triune God. Its purpose is to remind believers of this self-revelation of God, but also to make it directly tangible and perceptible through word and sacrament. For this reason, the divine service has the function of imparting salvation. The individual elements of the divine service—the preaching of the word, the celebration and dispensation of the sacraments, prayer, and blessing—are thus not arbitrary, but rather necessary. The specific way in which these elements are configured and the specific course of the service is characterised by the time and its circumstances. Thus it is quite understandable for the external structure of divine services to change over the course of time. The sequence of the divine service is bindingly defined by the apostolate, which is responsible for the order of the Church.

A divine service is fundamentally a public event, because it is the Christian congregation’s act of profession before the world. In order for such a community to come into being, it is necessary for at least one person to attend the divine service. New Apostolic divine services are always led by ministers who have been authorised to do so by the apostolate.

The New Apostolic divine service is characterised by its simplicity and focus on the sermon and the sacraments. However, this does not mean that the liturgical event as a whole is of a secondary nature. Rather, it requires great concentration, because an essential task of the ministers is to make God’s presence and holiness accessible and perceptible in the divine services.

The liturgy specifies the defined framework in which all activities in the divine services are to unfold in a uniform and dignified manner. The repeated components in the sequence of a divine service are intended, among other things, to demonstrate God’s consistent care to mankind. In this way, those who attend the divine service can feel secure in the unchanging faithfulness of God. In addition, the liturgy provides the officiating ministers with security for their actions.

In the New Apostolic Church there are two forms of divine service, namely the regular divine service incorporating the dispensation of the sacraments and the word service, which does not include the dispensation of the sacraments.

The sermon

The word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit bestows and sustains divine life. It is audible in the sermon, which is intended to make the will of God known. This requires sanctification and diligent preparation for the sermon on the part of the ministers.

The sacraments

The divine Word from which all speech of God emanates is Jesus Christ, the eternal Word by whom all things were made ([John 1: 1–3](#)). The sacraments—Holy Baptism with water, Holy Sealing, and Holy Communion—are also founded in Jesus Christ. In them human beings experience God’s activity of salvation. In the sacraments, this divine Word who became flesh in Jesus can be experienced by the believer with particular clarity.

The prayers

The prayers which are spoken are a dialogue with God and constitute the human response to God’s devotion. Through them, human beings show that they wish to have fellowship with God and receive orientation from Him.

The Lord’s Prayer, which is spoken collectively, also has a character of profession. Divine services are therefore a fellowship of word, sacrament, and profession.

The spiritual hymns

The spiritual hymns sung (or performed instrumentally) in a divine service are an expression of fellowship within the assembled congregation. The song texts not only bind the members of the congregation to one another but also to God. Spiritual hymns also give the divine service a festive atmosphere that facilitates access to God’s activity for each participant. *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 is to accompany the believers into their everyday lives. They can trust in God's grace, can feel sheltered in His love, and can be certain of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They are assured of God's protecting presence in their lives, such that they may 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. Everything that takes place in a divine service should be carried out solemnly, with the greatest possible calm and dignity.

Ministers involved in proclaiming the word must additionally be aware that they stand at the altar of God and proclaim His word. They should therefore pay attention to their way of speaking, their choice of words, and their conduct in the divine service. Ministers are not to mumble or speak monotonously, but rather understandably, with a lively voice, and not too quickly.

Visual contact with the congregation during the sermon creates an atmosphere of openness and personal closeness. Appropriate facial expressions and gestures should accompany the words and make them more understandable.

The congregation rises for collective prayers. Ministers and the congregation close their eyes during all prayers. Eyes can be kept open during other elements of the liturgy (Trinitarian formula, absolution, acts of blessing, dispensation of sacraments, etc.).

Each time the serving minister says "Amen", the congregation responds with "Amen" (except after the Benediction).

Preparing and clearing the altar

The altar must be prepared before the congregation arrives. The chalices should remain on the altar after the divine service until the members have left the room in which the service took place.

Length of divine services

The divine service should last:

- Sunday and church holy days 60 minutes
- midweek 45 minutes

In the case of festive divine services or divine services with sacramental acts or acts of blessing, an appropriate lengthening of the service is also possible.

Before the divine service

The time prior to the divine service should have a preparatory character and serve for the personal sanctification.

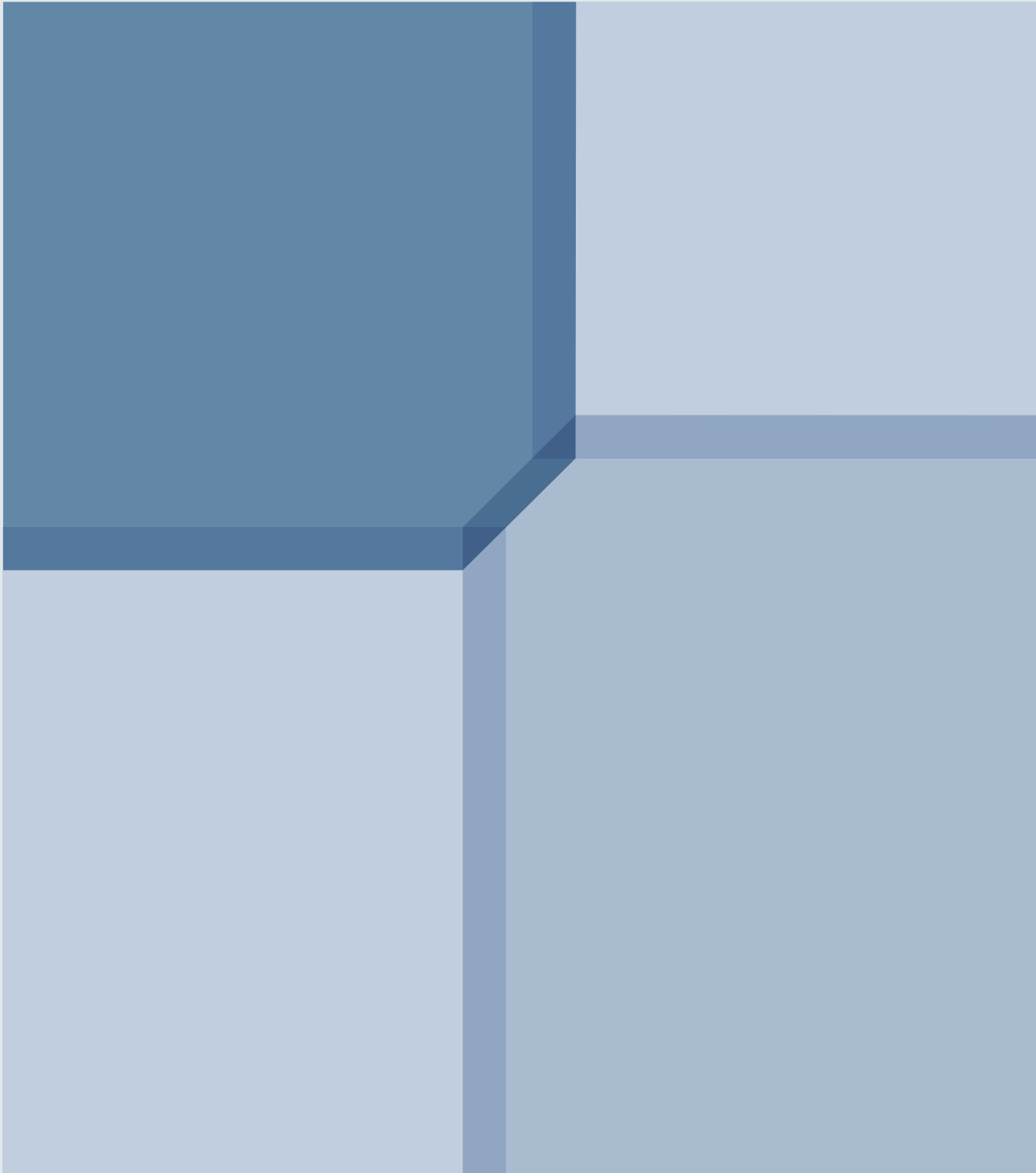
- greeting of members
- time for a personal prayer
- worship and music
- greeting on special occasion (for example, greeting of bridal couple in sacristy)
- silence in the congregation (approximately three minutes before beginning of service)
- sanctification and prayer of ministers (in the sacristy, possibly in the presence of the Deacons)

Summary

The divine service—which is an encounter between God and human beings—is an anticipated experience of our future fellowship with the triune God to which those who have been reborn out of water and the Spirit have been called. It is the focal point of church life. Its sequence unfolds in a mandatory order from the opening hymn up to the closing hymn in accordance with the bindingly defined liturgy. Random differences in the execution of the divine services are thereby avoided, and the unity of the Church is reinforced and brought to awareness.

The following explanations concerning the liturgy are intended to deepen understanding of the divine service experience.

THE DIVINE SERVICE



1.1 The liturgy of the divine service (short version)

1.1.1 Beginning of the divine service

Opening hymn

Commencement (invocation) in the triune name of God:

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

Opening prayer

Reading of the Bible text

Musical contribution

Reading of passage from the Bible¹ (as specified):

Recommended introduction:
“We will now hear a Bible reading.”

Musical contribution after the Bible reading (optional)

1.1.2 Sermon part

Sermon

Musical contribution when calling ministers to assist

Assisting ministers

Musical contribution following the sermon part (optional)

¹ If there is a prescribed reading from the Catechism, this will be mentioned accordingly.

1.1.3 Sacramental part

Preparation of congregation for forgiveness of sins and celebration of Holy Communion.

Should there be further sacraments to be dispensed before Holy Communion (Holy Baptism with water and/or Holy Sealing) and/or acts of blessing to be performed (adoption or confirmation), the officiant is to prepare the congregation also for these.

Hymn of repentance or a moment of silence

The Lord's Prayer

Recommended introductory words:

“Let us rise and join in the prayer which the Lord Jesus taught us.”

The Lord's Prayer:

*“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be Your name.
Your kingdom come.
Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And do not lead us into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.
For Yours is the kingdom and the
power and the glory forever.
Amen.”*

Absolution:

*“In the commission of my sender, the Apostle, (for Apostles: I now
proclaim the glad ...) 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.”*

Eucharistic prayer

Further sacraments and acts

- Holy Baptism with water
- Holy Sealing
- adoption or confirmation

Introduction to Holy Communion

Recommended invitation:

“And now we shall celebrate Holy Communion.”

Uncovering the communion chalices

Recommended words:

“And now the Lord’s table is prepared.”

Consecration of Communion elements with gesture:

*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
I consecrate bread and wine for Holy Communion and lay
thereupon the once brought, eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
For the Lord took bread and wine, gave thanks, and said:
This is My body which is broken for you. This is My blood of the new
covenant given for many for the remission of sins.
Eat and drink! Do this in remembrance of Me.
For as often as you eat this bread and drink this wine,
you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes. Amen.”*

The officiant takes the consecrated host. Thereafter other ministers receive Holy Communion.

Announcement of musical contributions for the celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation to Holy Communion

Recommended introductory words:

“The Lord now invites you to Holy Communion.”

When non-New Apostolic Christians are invited to Holy Communion, this can occur with the following words:

“Invited are all baptised souls who profess Jesus Christ as Lord, as well as His death, His resurrection, and His return.”

Handing out the communion chalices

Serving of Holy Communion:

“The body and blood of Jesus given for you!” or
“The body and blood of Jesus given for you and your child!”
(For adults with small children who cannot take the wafer for themselves.)

Holy Communion for the departed and possibly other sacraments for the departed

Replacement of lids on communion chalices

1.1.4 Further acts

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

1.1.5 End of divine service

Closing prayer

Benediction (with gesture of blessing):

“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: 14)

Three-fold Amen

Final musical contribution

1.2 The liturgy of the divine service (long version)

1.2.1 Beginning of the divine service

Opening hymn

The opening hymn is the collective address of God. It binds the believers together.

During the opening hymn, the ministers who have taken their place at the altar say a silent prayer.

Invocation

The commencement in the triune name of God in a divine service is as follows:

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

This is the invocation (proclamation) of the triune God and the assurance of His presence.

In awareness of this holy moment, the officiant speaks these words in a clear and accentuated manner.

Since the commencement in the triune name of God is not part of the opening prayer, the eyes of the officiant can remain open.

A pause in speaking is inserted between the triune name of God and the subsequent opening prayer.

Opening prayer

The officiant prays with the congregation and speaks on its behalf.

The prayer should be concise and dignified. The prayer is not the time to start the sermon or try to explain something to God.

The prayer should be spoken loudly and clearly. It should take approximately three to four minutes.

Contents of the prayer might include:

- worship and praise of God
- gratitude for the presence of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
- gratitude for His preservation, help, and grace
- the plea for divine peace
- gratitude for the hope of Christ's return and the ability to prepare for it
- the plea for forgiveness and reconciliation with God and with one another
- the plea for God's word to strengthen faith, bring comfort, and provide orientation for all those present, and for the proper understanding of the word
- intercession for brothers and sisters who cannot be present
- the plea for a connection to the apostolate
- the plea for a connection with one another and the departed
- the plea for sanctification and angel protection

If appropriate, significant events (for example, catastrophes) can be referenced in intercession.

Reading of Bible text

The officiant reads the Bible text with expression and dignity and without haste. Accentuated pronunciation helps direct the congregation's attention to the words of Holy Scripture.

The congregation sits down following the reading of the Bible text.

Musical contribution

Following the reading of the Bible text there is a musical contribution that can be either choral or instrumental (the participants rise for choral or congregational singing).

Bible reading (as specified)

A Bible reading serves to provide a better understanding of Christian holy days and the gospel. This makes it clear that the Bible is the basis of our faith and the preaching of our Church.

The Bible reading is specified in the *Divine Service Guide*. It should be taken from the Bible translation used in the respective Regional Church.

The Bible reading should take place in front of or next to the altar, if possible from a lectern and from a printed copy of the Bible. The officiant remains standing at the altar during the Bible reading, while the congregation is seated.

If the officiant takes on the task of reading, he or she should read from the altar.

Those who undertake the Bible reading must prepare themselves for this task.

The Bible reading is announced by the officiant.

Recommended announcement of the Bible reading²:
“We will now hear a Bible reading.”

Musical contribution following the Bible reading (optional)

A musical contribution can follow the Bible reading.

1.2.2 Sermon part

Sermon

God’s word and will is proclaimed to the congregation in the divine service.

The word of God is, first and foremost, the content recorded in Holy Scripture. The sermon must be oriented to this. The foundation of the sermon is thus a previously selected Bible text. The Chief Apostle provides the ministers with notes for interpretation of this passage (*Divine Service Guide*) so that they can prepare themselves for the divine services.

The sermon delivered by the officiant is not to exceed a maximum duration of 15 to 20 minutes. The sermon is concluded with “Amen”. In each case, the congregation responds with “Amen”.

² If there is a prescribed reading from the Catechism, this will be mentioned accordingly.

Musical contribution when calling ministers to assist

If possible, there should be a musical contribution after the main sermon and when other ministers are called to assist.

Assisting ministers

Assisting ministers should not serve for more than five minutes each. These contributions to the sermon are completed by “Amen”. In each case, the congregation responds with “Amen”.

Musical contribution following the sermon part (optional)

The sermon part can be concluded with a musical contribution.

1.2.3 Sacramental part

Preparation of congregation for forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion

Following the sermon, the congregation is prepared for the forgiveness of sins (absolution) and the celebration of Holy Communion.

The fact that forgiveness of sins is even possible is only thanks to the grace of God. His love for sinful mankind is demonstrated in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ and the latter’s death on the cross. This perfect, eternally valid sacrifice is the foundation for the forgiveness of sins.

The forgiveness of sins (absolution) is not a sacrament, but it is a prerequisite for receiving the sacraments worthily.

The subsequent celebration of Holy Communion guarantees fellowship of life with Jesus Christ.

The content of the preparation may include the following points:

- the instruction to repent
- a reminder of Jesus’ washing of the disciples’ feet (self-abasement)
- acknowledgement of personal sinfulness and guilt
- willingness to forgive and reconcile
- gratitude for Christ’s sacrifice

- envisioning of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- remembrance of Jesus' suffering and death
- remembrance of the initiation of Holy Communion
- reminder that the proper administration of the sacraments has been entrusted to the Apostle ministry
- hymn of repentance or a moment of silence

Following these words of preparation for the forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion, the congregation sings the hymn of repentance.

The hymn of repentance is an expression of collective confession of sins before God and each other.

The congregation remains seated during the hymn of repentance. The choir stands if it is asked to sing.

In place of the hymn of repentance, the officiant may invite the congregation to observe a moment of silence (with a maximum duration of one minute). A moment of silence is a time of reflection and can help us experience God's nearness through repentance and remorse. The congregation remains seated for this.

The Lord's Prayer

The officiant invites the congregation to join in the Lord's Prayer. He can use words to the following effect:

“Let us rise and join in the prayer which the Lord Jesus taught us.”

The congregation stands while praying the Lord's Prayer.

Absolution

The Lord's Prayer is followed by the absolution, which is formulated as follows:

“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 be with you. Amen.”

This makes it clear that the priestly ministry has been authorised by the apostolate to proclaim the forgiveness of sins.

The absolution is not a prayer. It can be pronounced with eyes open. The text may be read aloud.

The congregation stands during the absolution. The members confirm their believing acceptance of this forgiveness and the peace of Jesus with “Amen”.

Eucharistic prayer

The Eucharistic prayer includes praise and thanks for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It serves as a reminder of the Lord’s suffering and death. At the same time, it draws attention to the fact that Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of Holy Communion in the circle of His Apostles.

The Eucharistic prayer can therefore include:

- gratitude for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- gratitude for the grace of forgiveness of sins
- gratitude for the institution of Holy Communion by the Lord
- gratitude for the sending of the apostolate in the past and present
- gratitude for the anticipated return of Jesus Christ
- the invocation of the Holy Spirit (epiclesis), who guarantees the presence of the body and blood of Jesus and helps us to receive the meal for salvation and strength

The Eucharistic prayer is concluded with “Amen”. The congregation reinforces this with “Amen”.

Further sacraments and acts

The dispensation of sacraments and other acts of blessing, namely Holy Baptism with water, Holy Sealing, adoption, or confirmation, may follow the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, but occurs prior to the consecration of Holy Communion.

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

- Holy Baptism with water
- adoption
- Holy Sealing
- confirmation

These acts can be introduced and concluded with a musical selection.

The forgiveness of sins provides the sanctification required for receiving the sacraments and the aforementioned holy acts. The sacraments and acts also constitute a profession. This is associated with regular participation in Holy Communion.

After these acts, the believers involved receive Holy Communion together with the congregation. This expresses that they are now part of the congregation, and underlines the fellowship characteristic of Holy Communion. The ministers and the congregation together comprise this fellowship of Holy Communion.

Introduction to Holy Communion

Following the Eucharistic prayer—and the dispensation of sacraments and other holy acts, if applicable—the officiant introduces Holy Communion.

Recommended introduction to Holy Communion:

“And now we shall celebrate Holy Communion.”

Uncovering the communion chalices

The invitation to the celebration of Holy Communion is followed by moments of silence.

The chalices are uncovered in silence. The chalices are not usually uncovered by the officiant. If no other priestly ministers are present, this liturgical event can be performed by Deacons.

The question of who should uncover the chalices and who should be assigned to serve Holy Communion should be settled before the service.

Once the ministers have uncovered the communion chalices and have returned to their seats, the officiant announces the beginning of the consecration of the sacramental elements to the congregation with the following recommended wording:

“And now the Lord’s table is prepared.”

Consecration

The bread and wine are not changed in their substance when the words of institution are spoken in the consecration. Rather, the substance of Jesus' body and blood are joined to them (consubstantiation).

In Holy Communion, the bread and wine correspond to the human nature of Christ, while the body and blood correspond to His divine nature.

Bread and wine are not metaphors or symbols for the body and blood of Christ. Rather, the body and blood of Christ are truly present (real presence).

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Golgotha is also present in Holy Communion. So it is that each celebration of Holy Communion allows the participants to envision the sacrificial death of the Lord, such that they can proclaim it with conviction.

During the consecration of the elements, the officiant extends his or her arms, pointing to the chalices with his or her hands. If the chalices are only on one side of the altar, both arms can point in this direction.

The consecration can be spoken with open eyes. Reading of the consecration text is permissible.



Consecration of Holy Communion



Consecration of Holy Communion

Consecration formula

<i>In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,</i>	Beginning of sacrament in the triune name of God
<i>I consecrate</i>	Act
<i>bread and wine for Holy Communion,</i>	Description of the natural elements, the means of the sacrament
<i>and lay thereupon the once brought, eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ.</i>	Envisioning of Jesus Christ's sacrifice in the present and the joining of the body and blood of Jesus Christ (consubstantiation)
<i>For the Lord</i>	Remembrance of the event
<i>took bread and wine, gave thanks, and said:</i>	Reference to natural elements
<i>This is My body which is broken for you.</i>	Participation in the life of Christ
<i>This is My blood of the new covenant,</i>	Presence of Christ's sacrifice
<i>given for many for the remission of sins.</i>	Reference to Christ's sacrifice as the basis for the forgiveness of sins
<i>Eat and drink!</i>	Invitation to partake of Christ's body and blood
<i>Do this in remembrance of Me.</i>	Meal of remembrance: remembrance of His bitter suffering but also of His promise to return
<i>For as often as you eat this bread and drink this wine,</i>	Meal of fellowship that takes place repeatedly
<i>you proclaim the Lord's death</i>	Meal of profession
<i>till He comes.</i>	Eschatological meal
<i>Amen.</i>	Confirmation of that which was previously said.

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

- **meal of commemoration**—remembrance of the institution of Holy Communion and the sacrificial death of Christ, as well as His promise to return
- **meal of profession**—that is, the profession of the Lord’s sacrificial death, resurrection, and return
- **meal of fellowship**—fellowship of Jesus with His Apostles, Jesus’ fellowship with the congregation, and fellowship of the members with one another
- **eschatological meal**—anticipation of fellowship with Jesus Christ in the marriage in heaven
- **presence of Christ’s sacrifice**—the events of Golgotha are envisioned in the present
- **presence of Christ’s body and blood**—the glorified body of the Lord is truly present

Holy Communion for the ministers

The officiant picks up a chalice and serves him- or herself Holy Communion.



The officiant takes Holy Communion

The congregation remains standing until the ministers at the altar have received Holy Communion from the officiant. This can be accompanied by a musical contribution.

Announcement of musical contributions for the celebration of Holy Communion

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

Invitation to Holy Communion

The congregation is invited with words to the following effect:

“The Lord now invites you to Holy Communion.”

The officiant then hands the communion chalices to the Priests who are to dispense Holy Communion.

Following the distribution of the chalices, the musical contribution can begin. It can also take place after the congregation has received Holy Communion.

In festive divine services with many participants, the distribution of communion chalices can be handled differently, for example, with musical accompaniment.

If applicable, 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 to invite them:

“Invited are all baptised souls who confess Jesus Christ as Lord, as well as His death, His resurrection, and His return.”

Those regularly authorised to participate include sealed members, adopted members, and those who have been baptised in our Church. Duly baptised guests (that is, those baptised with water and in the triune name of God) are permitted to participate. Those who have not been baptised should not receive Holy Communion. However, no one should be prevented from participating.

Handing out the communion chalices

The inner composure of the ministers with regard to Holy Communion should also be reflected in their outward posture. This also applies to the dignified handling of the communion chalices.



Handing out the communion chalice



Handing over the communion chalice



Handing out the paten



Handing over the paten

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 wafer should be served as shown in the photo below.

The serving of the body and blood of Christ must never be rushed. When serving Holy Communion anything that could disturb the recipient in his or her devotion, or that might impede the holiness of the sacrament, must be avoided.



Serving of the wafer

Where possible, the altar should remain occupied by a minister during the celebration of Holy Communion.

Replacing the lids on the communion chalices

The communion lids are only replaced once the congregation has returned to their seats and the musical contributions during the celebration of Holy Communion have been completed. As a rule, the same ministers who uncovered the chalices should also cover them again. If Holy Communion for the departed is also to be celebrated, the chalices present on the altar remain open until the end of this sacramental act.

Further acts and completion of divine service

On Sundays and church holy days, the apostolate dispenses Holy Communion and possibly also the other sacraments to the departed. These acts are commenced and concluded with a musical contribution. The chalices are only covered again once the last musical contribution has been completed. The congregation remains standing.

If applicable, this is followed by:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

A musical piece may also be performed. The congregation is seated in this case.

Closing prayer

Recommended introduction:

“Please rise for the closing prayer and the benediction.”

The final prayer is to be short and can include the following points:

- gratitude for God’s word and grace
- the plea for God’s protection, help, and accompanying presence
- intercession for the needy, the sick, the oppressed, and persecuted
- intercession for those who bear responsibility in state and society

- the plea for blessing of the material offerings, of everything done for the Lord and in His work of redemption, and of those who have brought these offerings and sacrifices
- the plea for the gathering, preparation, and perfection of the bridal congregation
- the plea for the imminent return of Christ

The 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: 14)

The benediction is dispensed with extended arms in a gesture of blessing. The palms should point toward the congregation.



Gesture of blessing

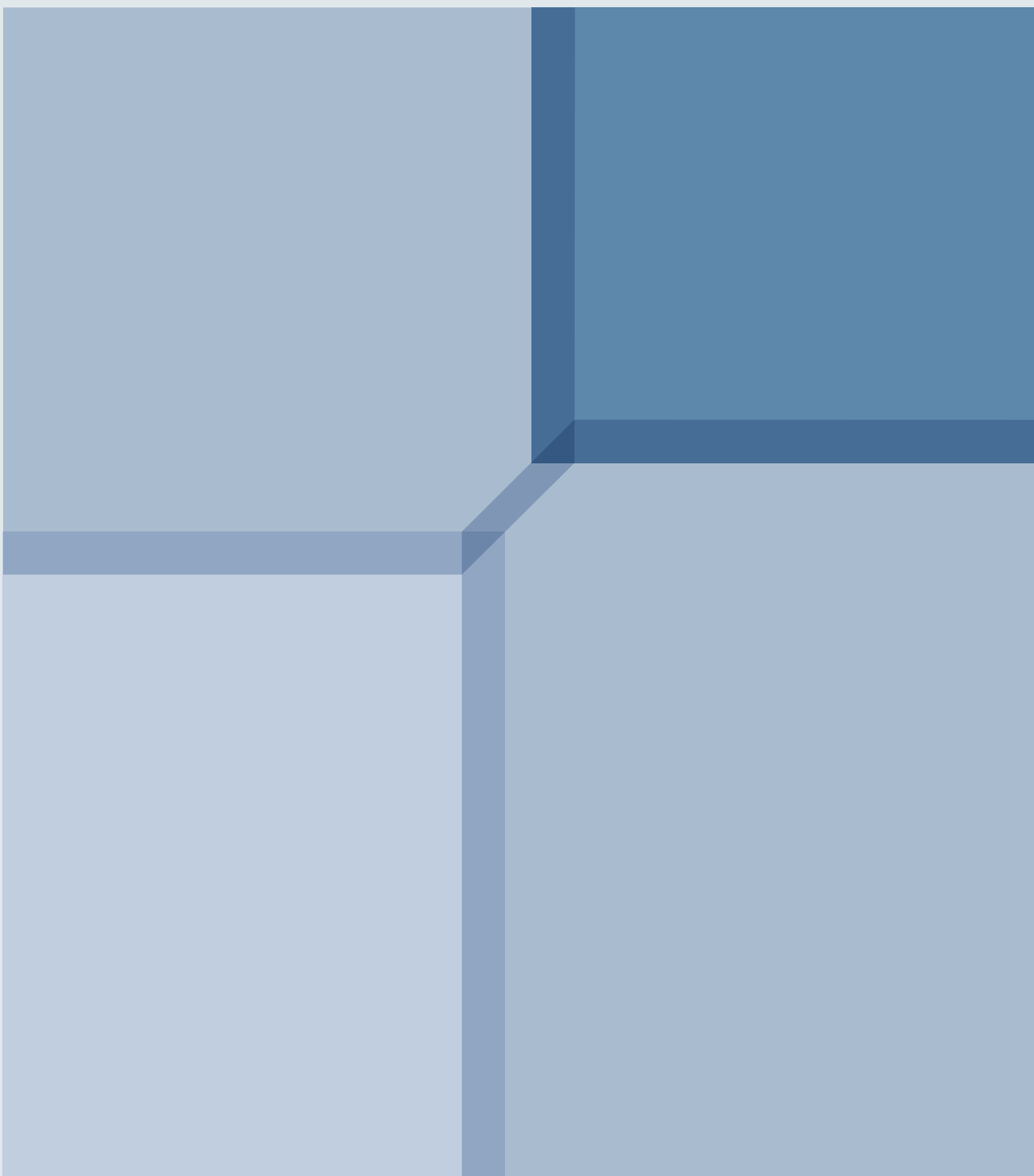
The benediction is followed by the threefold “Amen” as a liturgical song by the congregation.

Following this, the officiant closes the Bible.

Final musical contribution

The benediction is followed by a musical contribution.

SPECIAL TYPES OF DIVINE SERVICES



2.1 Word service

2.1.1 Liturgy of the word service

The word service focuses on the preaching of the word. No sacraments are dispensed in a word service.

Word services are intended to serve or provide pastoral care to certain circles or for special occasions.

If a priestly minister is unavailable for regular divine services, Deacons can conduct word services within the scope of their authority (including the dispensation of the Trinitarian benediction). Prior consultation with the Apostle is required.

In the event that the priestly minister who has been scheduled to conduct the divine service fails to arrive, a Deacon should conduct a word service.

Apostles and priestly ministers can perform acts of blessing in a word service. Although a Deacon can dispense the benediction, he or she does not perform any further acts of blessing such as a wedding, for example.

In a word service there are no communion chalices on the altar. The officiant assumes his or her position behind the altar during the opening hymn.

A word service has the following sequence:

- opening hymn
- invocation
- opening prayer
- reading of the Bible text
- musical contribution
- sermon based on the *Divine Service Guide*
- assisting ministers (optional)
- musical contribution when calling ministers to assist
- musical contribution following the sermon part (optional)
- introductory words prior to the Lord's Prayer
- collectively spoken Lord's Prayer
- closing prayer
- benediction
- threefold "Amen" sung by congregation
- final musical contribution (optional)

A word service should not last longer than 45 minutes.

2.1.2 Word service in which Holy Communion can be taken

If it can be expected that divine services with dispensation of sacraments will not take place over a longer period, and that only word services can be held by a Deacon, there is an opportunity for Holy Communion to be taken at appropriate intervals. Since a priestly minister is not present, members can only receive and partake of previously consecrated communion wafers. Please follow the guidelines under "Prayer service (with liturgical form)" (see chapter 3.1).

2.2 Divine service for the departed

2.2.1 Divine service for the departed with prayer of intercession

The sequence of a divine service for the departed corresponds to that of a divine service with dispensation of the sacraments (regular divine service).

When a divine service for the departed takes place that only incorporates a prayer of intercession, the congregation is prepared for this prayer of intercession by way of a brief address following the celebration of Holy Communion.

This prayer of intercession can have the following content:

gratitude that

- through Jesus' sacrifice, even unredeemed souls in the beyond can receive salvation
- access to the kingdom of God and eternal life is also open to them when they receive the sacraments
- the souls have fellowship with Jesus Christ, their Lord and Saviour

intercession for unredeemed souls

- that they may believe in Jesus Christ and accept the gospel, and that they may recognise the significance of the Apostle ministry
- that they may receive the strength to approach Jesus Christ with trust and humbleness
- that they may have a longing for God's mercy and the sacraments.
- that God may grant them His love and care, and that they may receive salvation from Jesus Christ

The intercessory prayer is introduced and concluded with a musical contribution.

Sequence in the divine service for the departed with prayer of intercession:

- The congregation remains seated during the introductory address and the introductory musical contribution. The congregation rises for the prayer of intercession and also remains standing for the concluding musical contribution.
- The musical contributions have a comprehensible spiritual relationship to the events.

After the prayer of intercession, other acts may be performed or—as a rule—this is followed directly by the closing prayer and final benediction.

2.2.2 Divine service for the departed with dispensation of the sacraments

The proper administration of the sacraments is incumbent on the apostolate. The sacraments are dispensed to both the living and the dead. As a rule, the Chief Apostle and the District Apostles perform these acts.

Sequence in the divine service for the departed with dispensation of the sacraments:

- The sacraments are dispensed to the departed following the celebration of Holy Communion with the congregation. The communion chalices on the altar remain uncovered until this dispensation of sacraments to the departed is complete.
- The dispensation of the sacraments is introduced and concluded with musical contributions (see below). The two ministers who receive the sacraments as proxies for the departed souls come to the altar before the introductory musical contribution and remain standing with the officiant until the end of the concluding musical contribution.
- Following the musical contribution and the introductory words of the officiant, the congregation is asked to rise for the subsequent dispensation of the sacraments of Holy Baptism, Holy Sealing, and Holy Communion. The officiant performs the respective sacramental acts one after the other.
- The congregation rises immediately before the sacramental acts for the departed are performed and remains standing during the concluding musical contribution.
- Both the introductory and closing musical contributions have a comprehensible spiritual relationship to the events.

After the dispensation of the sacraments for the departed, additional acts may follow, or—as a rule—the officiant proceeds directly to the closing prayer and benediction.

2.3 Dedication service

2.3.1 Divine service with dedication of a church building or divine service premises

Premises and buildings in which divine services take place on a regular basis are dedicated. The dedication can also take place outside of the regularly scheduled divine service times. It is an act of blessing and is usually conducted by the responsible Apostle. The Apostle may also delegate the dedication to ministers who carry a priestly ministry.

The sequence of a dedication service follows the liturgy of a regular divine service, and therefore includes the celebration of Holy Communion. The actual act of dedication takes place before the sermon. It consists of a blessing and a prayer.

The dedication service has the following sequence:

- invocation
- opening prayer
- reading of the Bible text
- musical contribution
- introductory words of the officiant
- act of dedication. The officiant asks the congregation to rise.

The officiant pronounces the following words 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. Amen.”

The dedication prayer can include the following content:

- This place is dedicated as a place of worship and of encounter with the triune God.
- May the peace of Christ be felt in this place.
- May the love and grace of Christ be experienced here.
- The proper administration of the sacraments occurs here.
- May the activity of the Holy Spirit be experienced here.
- This is the place where the apostolate prepares for the return of Christ.
- May the triune God grant this place, the congregation, and all who come and go in this place His protection and blessing.

The prayer is concluded with “Amen”. This is then followed by

- a musical contribution
- possibly a Bible reading (if the dedication takes place on a Christian holy day)
- the remaining divine service liturgy, including the dispensation of sacraments

2.3.2 Ceremonial act supplementary to the dedication

A separate ceremonial act can be held before or after the dedication service. The address by the officiant can be followed by further contributions, for example, by the architect, ministers from other churches, or local officials. All official speeches are made in front of the altar or beside it from a lectern. As a rule, the ceremonial act is accompanied by musical contributions.

If a separate ceremonial act is not planned, official speeches can be carried out in the same manner in the dedication service following the benediction.

2.4 Decommissioning service

Divine service to decommission a church or a place of worship

Dedicated churches and places of worship which are no longer in use are decommissioned. Once it has been decommissioned, the site becomes a regular building that can be assigned to a different purpose. Decommissioning takes place during a divine service with the dispensation of sacraments. This final divine service should normally be conducted by the Apostle. The Apostle can delegate the decommissioning to other ministers with a priestly ministry.

As a rule, this divine service includes a look back. Content from the congregational chronicles can be read out.

In conclusion, gratitude is expressed to all those who have participated in church life.

If the decommissioning of the congregation is associated with an amalgamation into another congregation, the reinstatement of ministers can also take place in this divine service.

The closing prayer of the decommissioning service should include the following points:

- thanks that the congregation was able to gather in this building, and that it was a place of refuge from everyday cares and burdens
- gratitude that the presence of the triune God was felt here in word, sacrament, and blessing
- the plea that the faith of the congregation's members may be strengthened and that they may remain protected in their new congregation or, if applicable, the plea for blessed congregational life in the new church building

The closing prayer is concluded with "Amen".

This is followed by the decommissioning with the following words:

“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I decommission this place of 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 the service.

2.5 Wedding service

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.

Wedding services are separately scheduled word services incorporating an act of blessing, namely the dispensation of a wedding blessing. They are conducted by the Apostle or a priestly minister, and should take place in a church or other dignified place. A wedding service should not last longer than 45 minutes.

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

- Entry of the bride (congregation stands and remains standing)
- Opening invocation
- Opening prayer
- Reading of the 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
- Dispensation of the wedding blessing concluding with the benediction
- Conveyance of greeting or best wishes or a prayer by a minister from a different Christian denomination (if applicable)
- 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/country/etc. is the responsibility of the minister and wedding couple.

Generally, sacred and classical music is appropriate for weddings. The location should contribute to a holy atmosphere. Requests for an officiant from outside the couple's district should be approved by the local Apostle.

Question in the case of a civil marriage conducted by the Church

If the civil marriage or traditional marriage is also performed by the Church, this takes place after the address of the officiant and before the wedding blessing. The couple give their marriage vows. The questions addressed to the bridal couple depend on the respective legal requirements. After the vows or the agreement of the bridal couple, the officiant declares them a lawfully married couple by virtue of his or her civil authority.

In terms of liturgy, the question to the bridal couple or the couple's exchange of vows is followed by the wedding blessing.

Questions addressed to the bridal couple prior to the wedding blessing

The questions and vows can be formulated per our tradition. See the **NAC USA Member Center** site for additional thoughts. Prior to the dispensation of the blessing, the officiant asks the bridal couple for their "Yes" or "I do." The couple can be asked these questions individually or jointly, depending on regional custom. The questions asked of the bride and groom should have the following content.

Is the bridegroom and is the bride willing to:

- recognise the man or woman at their side as a gift of God?
- stand together in all circumstances and remain faithful to each other, as long as they live?
- treat each other with love and esteem, and lead their lives together in accordance with the commandments of God?

Individual vows of the bridal couple prior to the wedding blessing

As an alternative to being asked by the officiant, the bridal couple may exchange vows prior to the blessing by repeating a text read to them by the officiant or by themselves. In so doing, the bridal couple face one another.

First, the bridegroom makes his vow as follows:

“I, (name of the groom), recognise 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), recognise 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

The bridal couple may wish to exchange rings in the wedding service. If the bridal couple so desires, the officiant asks them to exchange rings following their yes or their vows and before dispensing the wedding blessing. No words accompany the exchange of rings.

Depending on local tradition, the exchange of rings can also occur 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 or her 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.”

The wedding blessing can also contain further wishes using the following approximate 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 with “Amen,” and then the benediction is proclaimed. The officiant then congratulates the couple.

At the request of couples belonging to different denominations, a member of the clergy of the denomination of the non-New Apostolic partner can speak some words of greeting, express his or her best wishes or say a prayer, and congratulate the couple. However, there is neither a collective dispensation of blessing nor an additional blessing. The address of the visiting clergy member takes place in front of the altar.

2.6 Funeral service

Word service on the occasion of a funeral

A funeral service is first and foremost a reference to the fact that God is the Lord over life and death. It serves to commemorate the departed individual and to comfort and strengthen the bereaved through the Holy Spirit.

Even when confronted with death and despair, we can recall the promise of the gospel that Jesus Christ is the life ([John 14: 19](#)).

Above all, our comfort lies in the hope of Christ's return and the associated resurrection of the dead in Christ ([1 Thessalonians 4: 13–18](#)).

The congregation assembled for the funeral surrounds the bereaved and imparts sympathy and security.

The funeral can take place at the cemetery, in one of our churches, at a funeral parlour, or—depending on regional custom—at the home of the family.

The sequence of the funeral service corresponds to that of a word service and is conducted by a priestly minister or an Apostle. The sequence is the same for all types of burial. The service can take place directly with the interment or on a separate occasion.

In addition to the interpretation of the Bible text, the sermon can also include references to the life of the deceased.

The blessing and surrendering of the body take place following the sermon portion. As a rule, both should take place at the interment because the words with which the body is surrendered are accompanied by a corresponding act (gesture of blessing).

If the interment takes place without a minister or a body, the surrendering of the body and the blessing take place during the funeral service.

Surrendering of the body and funeral blessing

At the conclusion of the sermon (and after assisting ministers), the congregation is invited to join in the Lord's Prayer. This is followed by the surrendering of the body and the funeral blessing. For all types of burial, the liturgical text for the surrendering of the body is as follows:

“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.”

The blessing is administered directly thereafter with the gesture of blessing, that is, with 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 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 follows the officiant's lead.

Eulogies, which are common in certain regions, can be incorporated into the funeral service, preferably following the benediction.

Sequence of the funeral service as an overview:

- musical contribution (optional)
- invocation
- opening prayer
- reading of the Bible text
- musical contribution (optional)
- sermon
- musical contribution when calling ministers to assist (optional)
- assisting minister (optional)
- Lord's Prayer
- surrendering of the body
- funeral blessing
- musical contribution or moments of silence (optional)
- closing prayer

- benediction
- threefold “Amen” sung by congregation
- musical contribution (optional)
- reading of the curriculum vitae or eulogies (optional)
- final musical contribution (optional)

Interment at a later point in time

The interment at the cemetery has the following sequence (identical for burials, cremations, or burials at sea):

- musical contribution (optional)
- invocation
- opening prayer
- musical contribution (optional)
- short address
- Lord’s Prayer
- surrendering of the body
- blessing
- closing prayer
- benediction
- eulogies (optional)
- final musical contribution (optional)

2.7 Dispensation of sacraments and acts of blessing outside of the divine service

Dispensation of sacraments

In special cases, sacraments can also be received outside of the public divine services (for example, in hospitals, nursing homes, at home, and so on).

This celebration of the sacraments is performed in accordance with the divine service liturgy.

If sacraments are desired in a hospital or nursing home, for example, it must be ensured that they can be performed in a dignified manner.

Acts of blessing

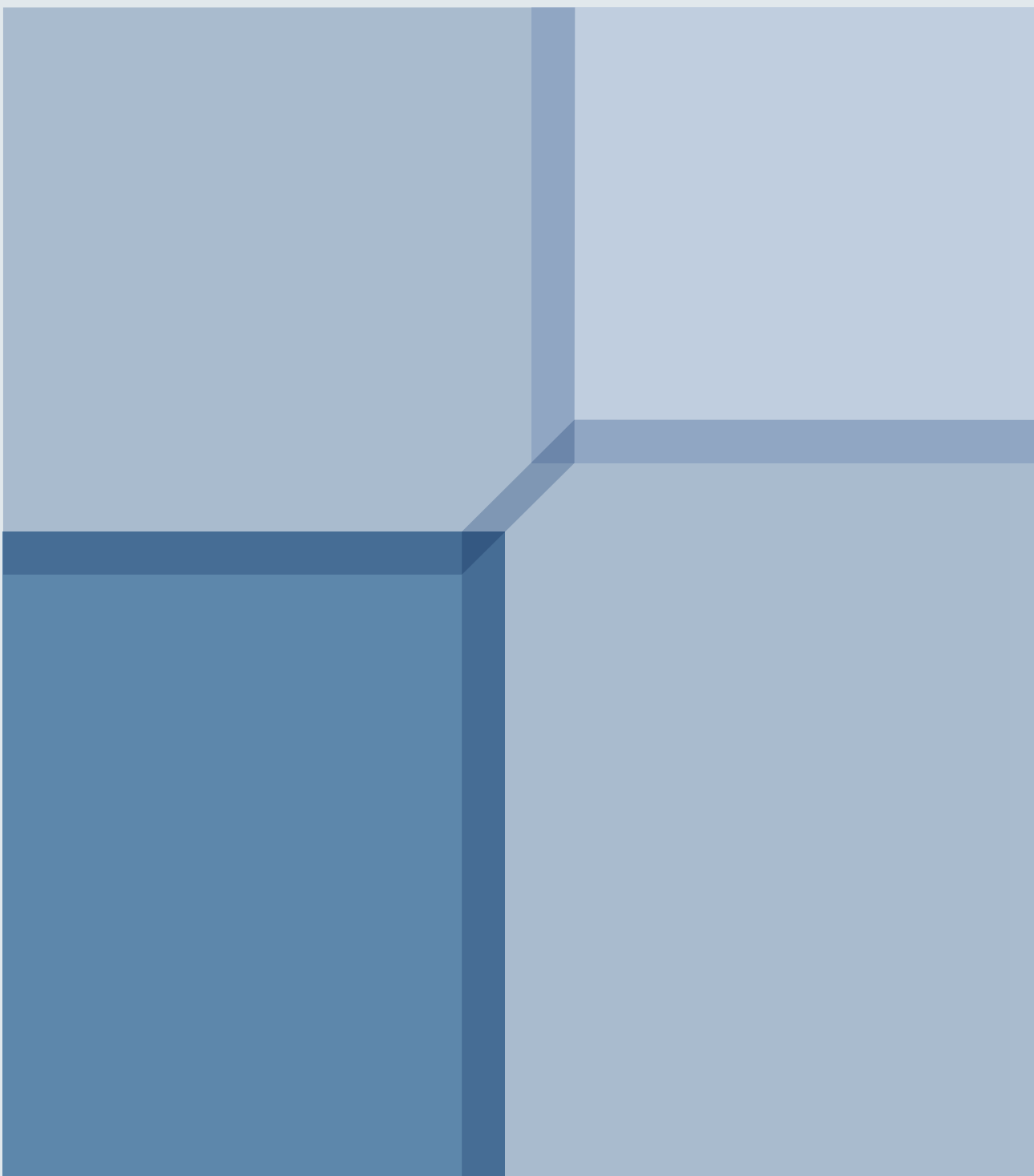
Acts of blessing may also be received outside of the public divine services (for example in hospitals, nursing homes, at home, and so on). The details are regulated by the Regional Church.

The dispensation of the prenatal blessing as the first visible act of God upon a human being is usually performed in the context of a pastoral care visit (see chapter 4.7).

The act of blessing (for example, a wedding anniversary blessing) takes place after the address, the Trinitarian formula, and the opening prayer, which is concluded with “Amen”. The celebration is concluded with prayer and blessing.

The liturgy corresponds to that of a word service (chapter 2.1).

PRAYER SERVICE WITH AND WITHOUT LITURGICAL FORM



3.1 Prayer service (with liturgical form)

Liturgical celebration led by non-ordained members

Where divine services can only take place sporadically or when, for a longer period of time, no priestly minister is available to conduct divine services, this can be compensated by word services conducted by Deacons in consultation with the apostolate (see “Word service”, chapter 2).

However, if there are no ministers available at all, non-ordained members 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 care and fellowship. For this reason, prayer services should preferably take place in the location where divine services are usually conducted.

A prayer service differs from other devotionals which are conducted by ministers or laypersons on special occasions and have no fixed form (see “Devotionals”, chapter 3.2).

If it is necessary to conduct prayer services, the Apostle or a minister designated by him or her for this purpose can authorise a member of the congregation to perform this task. This can be done, for example, in a divine service, by phone, or by letter.

Just like a divine service, a prayer service is open to all.

Form of a prayer service

If an altar is present in the place of worship, it should be prepared as for a word service, that is, without communion chalices.

The person conducting the prayer service stands or sits in front of the altar (if present) throughout 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 a prayer service

If possible, the group should sing a hymn together. The prayer service does not start with the invocation (or trinitarian formula), because this is not a divine service. The prayer service begins with a prayer.

This can include:

- praise and glorification of God
- thanks for the protection, help, and grace He has bestowed
- the plea for divine peace
- the plea for the strengthening of fellowship
- the plea for connection to the Apostle ministry
- intercession for brothers and sisters who cannot be present

A further musical contribution can then follow. This is followed by the reading of a Bible text in accordance with specifications.

This is then followed by the reading of a text which the Apostle has provided. The reading of this text does not conclude with “Amen”. If references to biblical texts are included, these can also be read aloud from holy Scripture.

Musical contributions can enrich the prayer service.

As part of the prayer service, participants can be given the opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts in response to the text that was read.

Conclusion of a prayer service

The Lord’s Prayer is spoken collectively at the end of the prayer service.

The prayer service is concluded with a freely spoken prayer.

This prayer can have the following content:

- thanks for God’s word and fellowship
- intercession for congregational members, for the needy, the sick, the oppressed, and persecuted
- the plea for blessing upon the offerings that have been brought

- the plea for God's blessing, protection, and peace, for His help and accompanying presence
- the plea for the imminent return of Christ
- the plea to be accepted upon Christ's return

Prayer service in which Holy Communion can be taken

If it can be expected that divine services will not take place over a longer period, and that only word services or prayer services can be held, the Apostle can rule that the participants at word or prayer services can take Holy Communion at appropriate intervals. This applies if there are no other possibilities for the normal celebration of the sacrament.

Such prayer services in which Holy Communion can be taken are conducted based on the practice of pastoral care letters containing consecrated wafers, which are sent out to members by the District Apostle in defined individual cases.

The congregation gathered for the prayer service receives a pastoral care letter with consecrated wafers. The wafers from the pastoral care letter are poured into a suitable vessel or communion chalice, which is placed on the altar or a table for this purpose.

Procedure for taking Holy Communion in the prayer service:

- After the congregation has prayed the Lord's Prayer together, the person conducting the prayer service reads the absolution from the pastoral care letter.
- The person conducting the prayer service opens the communion chalice containing the consecrated wafers from the pastoral care letter.
- Then he or she reads out the words in the pastoral care letter for taking the wafers: "The body and blood of Jesus given for you!"
- Following this, each of the participants in the prayer service takes a wafer.

When Holy Communion is taken in a word service (chapter 2.1.2), the sequence is the same.

3.2 Devotional (without liturgical form)

Occasional gathering without liturgical form

In contrast to prayer services that have a firmly defined liturgical form, devotionals are occasional gatherings that do not have a liturgical form.

Possible occasions for devotionals might include church holy days or events in society, as well as memorial days or catastrophes. For example, devotionals can be held on Christmas Eve or Maundy Thursday (institution of Holy Communion). Likewise, a devotional might take place prior to a divine service for the departed in order to commemorate the departed. Devotionals might also be held on the occasion of congregational anniversaries or in connection with other events of public relations work, missionary efforts, or fellowship with other Christian denominations. A devotional always has a Christian content.

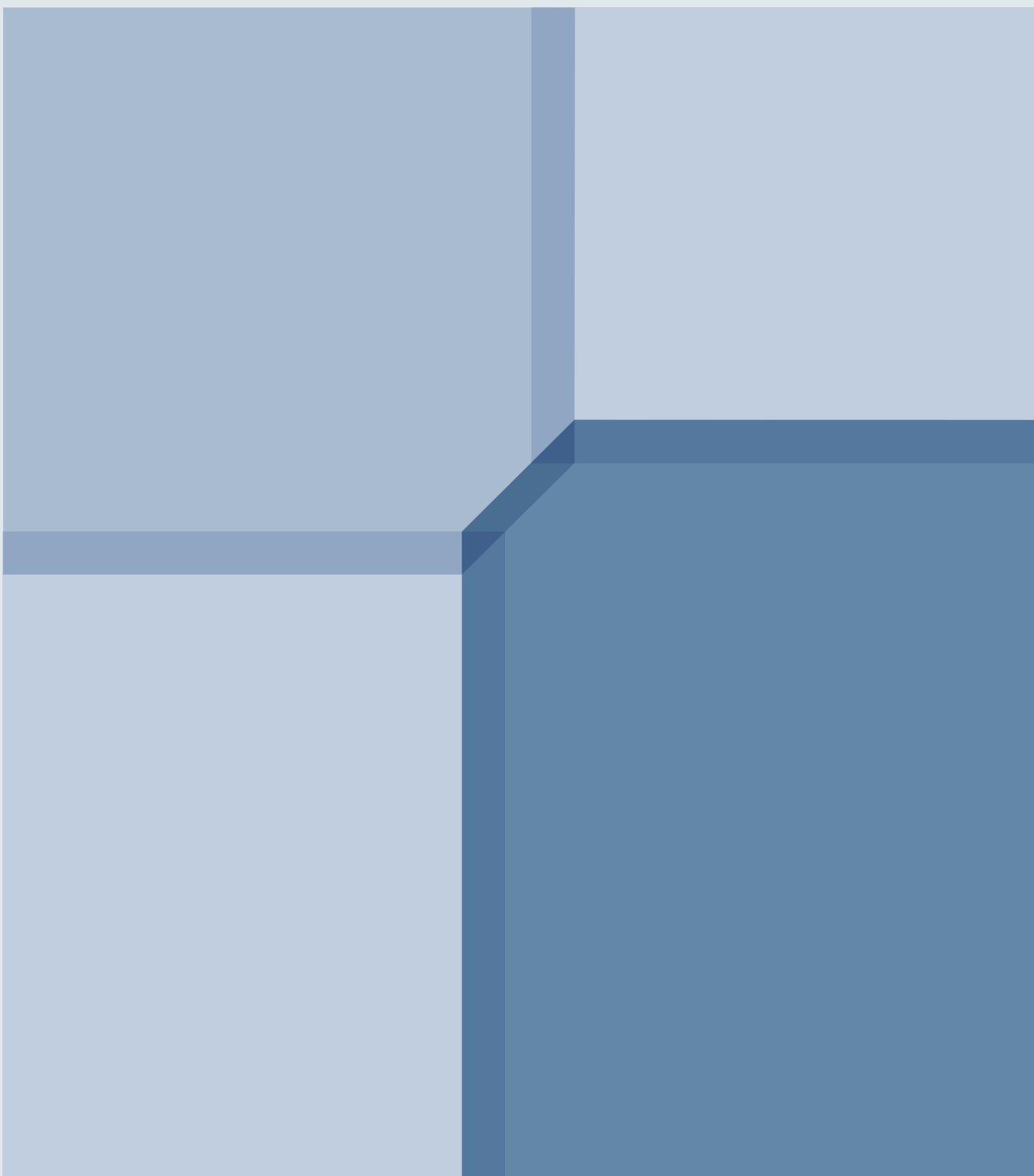
Sequence of a devotional:

A devotional has no liturgical form. It is therefore not a special type of divine service. The presence of ministers is not required to conduct a devotional. Its sequence is defined by the individual presiding over it.

A devotional is not conducted from the altar. In a devotional, there is no preaching of the word, dispensation of sacraments, or any act of blessing. A devotional begins and concludes with a prayer. It does not begin with an invocation of the Trinity, nor is the benediction spoken. There is no threefold “Amen”.

The congregational rector decides on the celebration of devotionals in the church building. Their format must always be appropriate to the holiness of God’s house.

DISPENSATION OF SACRAMENTS AND ACTS OF BLESSING



4.1 Holy Baptism with water

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

Liturgical position

The dispensation of the sacraments is the central event in the (regular) divine service. Holy Baptism with water takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, and can be introduced with a piece of music. If other sacraments or acts of blessing are planned before the celebration of Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- Holy Baptism with water
- adoption
- Holy Sealing
- confirmation

Execution

The sacrament of Holy Baptism with water is dispensed by an Apostle or a priestly minister. The dispensation of the sacrament takes place in front of the altar.

Address at the baptism of children³

The following is to be expressed:

- Jesus valued the children when He said, “Let the little children come to Me.” Therefore children may also receive the sacraments.
- Parents bear responsibility for the child’s upbringing in the Christian faith, as it is proclaimed in the New Apostolic Church.
- The congregation is called upon to comprise a space that allows the child to be strengthened in faith and to feel cared for and loved.

³ In the event that persons other than the parents are to assume responsibility for the religious upbringing of the child, the following remarks should be addressed to these guardians.

- Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental sacramental act of grace of the triune God bestowed upon a human being.⁴ It is necessary for salvation.
- Through baptism, the person being baptised is incorporated into the body of Christ, that is, the church of Christ.
- Baptism signifies burial and resurrection with Christ.⁵
- Through baptism, original sin is washed away.⁶

Address at the baptism of adults⁷

The following is to be expressed:

- The faith and knowledge of the person being baptised are prerequisites for receiving Holy Baptism with water.
- This also includes the profession of the New Apostolic faith, specifically of
 - the triune God,
 - the death, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ, and
 - the sending and authority of the apostolate.
- This faith is practised in daily life and in the fellowship of divine service.
- The congregation is called upon to comprise a space that strengthens the faith of the baptised and allows him or her to feel cared for and loved.
- Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental sacramental act of grace of the triune God bestowed upon a human being.⁸ It is necessary for salvation.
- Through baptism, the person being baptised is incorporated into the body of Christ, that is, the church of Christ.
- Baptism signifies burial and resurrection with Christ.⁹
- Through baptism, original sin is washed away.¹⁰

4 Mark 16: 16

5 Romans 6: 4

6 Original sin is the state of separation from God that came into being through the fall into sin. Through baptism with water the believer is led out of this state. (The human inclination to sin remains).

7 This also includes older children who take responsibility for themselves.

8 Mark 16: 16

9 Romans 6: 4

10 See footnote 6

Vow at the baptism of children

The officiant asks the congregation to rise. The officiant then asks the parents the following:

“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 and teach him/her to remain faithful to the Lord? Then vow this with a clear yes.”

If one of the parents is not New Apostolic, this can be supplemented as follows:

“... in the New Apostolic faith and to support this upbringing ...”

Vow at the baptism of adults

The officiant then asks those to be baptised the following:

“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, and is it your wish to align your life by the gospel as proclaimed by the Apostles? Then vow this with a clear yes.”

Prayer following the vow

The vow is followed by a prayer. It may contain the following elements:

- the plea for strength and the ability to keep the vow
- the plea for a blessed development of the baptised person's faith

Consecration of the baptismal water

The water of baptism will now be consecrated. To this end, the minister holds his or her hand over the baptismal water 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

This is followed by the act of baptism. To this end, the officiant pronounces the following Trinitarian baptismal formula:

“I baptise you (possibly mention name) in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

As the officiant speaks the words of the baptismal formula, he or she makes the sign of the cross three times on the forehead of the person being baptised. The officiant dips his or her hand in the consecrated water each time and makes sure to use sufficient water.

The aforementioned Trinitarian formula and corresponding actions are repeated for each person being baptised.

The officiant then continues the act of baptism by placing his or her hand on the forehead of the person being baptised and stating 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.”

Dispensation of the baptismal blessing

This is followed directly by the baptismal blessing, which is dispensed through the 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

God the Son

- 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

God the Holy Spirit

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

If you confess Jesus Christ before men, He will also confess you before His Father who is in heaven.¹¹

Mandatory conclusion:

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

Introduction of Holy Communion

After the officiant has conveyed congratulations to the baptised and/or the parents, they return to their seats.

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

¹¹ Matthew 10: 32

4.2 Holy Sealing

Liturgical position

Holy Sealing takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, and can be introduced by way of a musical contribution. If several acts are planned before the celebration of Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- Holy Baptism with water
- adoption
- Holy Sealing
- confirmation

Execution

Holy Sealing is dispensed exclusively by the Apostle ministry. The act is performed in front of the altar.

Address at the sealing of children¹²

The following content is recommended:

- The gift of the Holy Spirit is dispensed, which means that the Spirit of God (a share of the nature of God) makes His permanent abode within the person (CNAC 8.3.9).
- This act completes that which was begun in Holy Baptism with water: the rebirth out of water and the Spirit is now complete, and childhood in God has been bestowed.
- The child receives the prerequisite for becoming a firstling and belonging to the bride of Christ.
- The parents bear responsibility for raising their children in the New Apostolic faith.

¹² In the event that persons other than the parents are to assume responsibility for the religious upbringing of the child, the following remarks should be addressed to these guardians.

Address at the sealing of adults

The following content is recommended:

- The gift of the Holy Spirit is dispensed, which means that the Spirit of God makes His permanent abode within the person.
- This act completes that which was begun in Holy Baptism with water: the rebirth out of water and the Spirit is now complete, and childhood in God has been bestowed.
- The believer receives the prerequisite for becoming a firstling and belonging to the bride of Christ.
- Those who have been sealed are now numbered among those whom God prepares for the return of Christ through the Apostle ministry. They are to allow themselves to be guided and strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

Vow

As witness to the dispensation of the sacrament and the vow of faithfulness, the congregation is asked to rise. The Apostle asks the parents of the child to vow that they will raise their child in the New Apostolic faith, or in the case of adults, asks them to profess this faith and vow to follow Christ.

Holy Sealing of a child

Liturgically binding text of the question to parents where both are New Apostolic:

“Dear parents, I now ask you before God and the congregation: Is it your wish to raise your child in the New Apostolic faith, as it comes to expression in the Creed, and will you teach your child to remain faithful to the Lord and prepare for His return through word and sacrament? Then vow this with a clear yes.”

If one of the parents is not New Apostolic, this can be supplemented as follows:

“... in the New Apostolic faith and to support this upbringing ...”

Holy Sealing of adults

Liturgically binding text of the question:

“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Do you profess the New Apostolic faith as it comes to expression in the Creed, and do you wish to follow Jesus Christ and allow yourself to be prepared for His return through word and sacrament? Then vow this with a clear yes.”

Prayer following the vow

A prayer follows after the vow. It should contain the following elements:

- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow
- the plea for the triune God to bestow the gift of the Holy Spirit
- the plea to God the Holy Spirit to accompany those who are to be sealed and to fill them with the strength to allow the gift of the Spirit to become active

Act of Holy Sealing

The proper dispensation of this sacrament requires the gesture of the laying on of hands as a visible sign. While laying his hands upon the forehead of the person being sealed, the Apostle dispenses the gift of the Holy Spirit with the following words:

“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

This can be followed by statements with the following content:

- The triune God is the one who now acts upon you.¹³
- He loves you and has drawn you to Himself.
- God seals you for the day of the return of Christ.¹⁴
- You receive the seal of God as a sign of your deliverance.

¹³ 2 Corinthians 1: 21–22

¹⁴ Ephesians 4: 30

- Hereby you have been called to serve at the side of Christ in the kingdom of peace.
- Jesus Christ writes your name into the Lamb’s Book of Life.¹⁵
- The gift of the Holy Spirit has the following effects:
 - It establishes childhood in God.
 - It makes you an heir of eternal life and a joint heir with Christ.¹⁶
 - It also gives you the prerequisite for becoming a firstling in the kingdom of God and for belonging to the bride of Christ.
- It is the pledge of future glory.¹⁷
- Through Holy Sealing, the Spirit of God makes His permanent abode in a human being. God Himself grants him or her a share in His nature: “The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.”¹⁸
- With this act you become “fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone”.¹⁹
- The Holy Spirit will comfort, strengthen, and protect you.

Mandatory conclusion:

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

Introduction of Holy Communion

After the officiant has conveyed congratulations to those who have been sealed, they return to their seats. If no other acts are planned, the congregation remains standing and the celebration of Holy Communion follows.

¹⁵ Revelation 21: 27

¹⁶ Titus 3: 5–7; Romans 8: 17

¹⁷ Ephesians 1: 14

¹⁸ Romans 5: 5/CNAC 8.3.9

¹⁹ Ephesians 2: 19–20

4.3 Holy Communion

The preparation and execution of the sacrament of Holy Communion is exhaustively described in chapters 1.1 and 1.2.

4.4 Adoption into the congregation²⁰

Liturgical position

The adoption of guests into the congregation is an act of blessing in which the person to be adopted professes the New Apostolic faith and is granted enduring access to Holy Communion. It takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, and can be introduced with a musical contribution.

If several acts are planned before the celebration of Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- 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

The following content is recommended:

- Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental act of grace of God.
- All people who are baptised, who believe in Christ, and who profess Him as their Lord are part of the church of Christ.
- Prerequisites for adoption include the belief and the profession that
 - Jesus Christ will return to take home His bridal congregation
 - the Apostles have been sent to prepare the bride of Christ for Christ's return
 - the gift of the Holy Spirit is received through Holy Sealing

²⁰ Guests should be familiarised with the New Apostolic Creed and it should be explained to them in pastoral meetings before they are adopted.

- The adoption gives the believer permanent access to the celebration of Holy Communion.

Adoption vow

The officiant asks the congregation to rise. Thereafter the officiant asks for a profession to the New Apostolic faith:

“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 vow is followed by a prayer. It should contain the following elements:

- the plea for the strength and ability to keep this vow
- the plea for a blessed development of the adopted member’s faith

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 with the following content may also be expressed:

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

Introduction of Holy Communion

After the officiant has conveyed congratulations to the adopted members, they return to their seats in the congregation.

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

4.5 Confirmation

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

Liturgical position

The act of confirmation exists in direct association with the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Sealing and therefore takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer.

As a rule, no further acts take place in confirmation services, other than confirmation and the celebration of Holy Communion.

If, by way of exception, other acts are planned before the celebration of Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- Holy Baptism with water
- adoption
- Holy Sealing
- confirmation

The act of confirmation can be introduced by a piece of music. The officiant, or a member of the congregation appointed by him or her, reads out the letter from the Chief Apostle, which is later handed out to the confirmands.

Execution

Confirmations can be performed by a priestly minister or an Apostle. The act takes place in front of the altar.

Address

The following content is recommended. The confirmands:

- assume responsibility for their life of faith
- publicly profess the New Apostolic faith as it comes to expression in the Creed
- promise to remain faithful to the triune God and avoid evil

- receive the blessing of God to help them keep their vow of faithfulness
- are invited to actively engage themselves in congregational life with their gifts and talents

Confirmation vow

The officiant asks the congregation to rise. Thereafter, the officiant asks the confirmands to profess their belief in the New Apostolic faith:

“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? Is it your wish 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 before God and the congregation. This is spoken by the confirmands together and states the following:

“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.”

Prayer for God’s blessing

After their yes and the confirmation vow, the officiant asks God for His blessing in a brief prayer.

Dispensation of blessing

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 and has granted you the rebirth out of water and the Spirit
- give you the strength to keep your confirmation vow

God the Son

- has sacrificed His life for you
- has elected you to be part of the bridal congregation
- be with you always
- grant you His peace

God the Holy Spirit

- strengthen your faith and give you the strength to keep your vow
- preserve you on your path of life and faith
- prepare you for the return of Christ

Mandatory conclusion:

*“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 responsible Christians. The congregation remains standing.

After the officiant has conveyed his or her best wishes, the confirmands return to their seats in the congregation. If the act of confirmation is concluded with a piece of music, the congregation takes a seat.

Introduction of Holy Communion

This is followed by the celebration of Holy Communion.

4.6 Blessings on wedding anniversaries²¹

Liturgical position

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). If during a divine service, the dispensation of the 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 sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

Execution

The dispensation of a wedding anniversary blessing is performed by a priestly minister or an Apostle. The act takes place in front of the altar or at the seat of the anniversary couple.

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

Address

The following content can be expressed:

- 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 or district
- where appropriate, a Bible text can be shared with some brief comments

²¹ CNAC 12.2.3.2

Prayer for God's blessing

The congregation rises for a prayer, in which the plea for God's blessing comes to expression.

Dispensation of blessing

The anniversary couple is asked to join their right hands. The officiant places his or her 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 following content may be expressed:

- God has protected you in the time that lies behind you.
- You are commended to His continual care.
- God awakens good thoughts within you so that you may bring joy to one another.
- May God continue to bless your marriage bond.
- May He prepare you for the return of Jesus Christ.

Mandatory conclusion:

*“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. This is followed by the closing prayer.

4.7 Prenatal blessing

Liturgical position

The prenatal blessing is dispensed as the first visible act of God upon a human being. The act of blessing is performed upon the mother at her request. As a rule, it is dispensed in the context of a pastoral care visit.

Execution

The prerequisite for receiving the blessing is that the pregnancy has been confirmed by medical diagnosis.

No promise of a problem-free pregnancy or the birth of a healthy baby is associated with the prenatal blessing.

The prenatal blessing is dispensed by the Apostle or a priestly minister.

Address

The act of blessing is prepared as follows²²:

- The prenatal blessing is the first visible act of God upon a human being.
- In this blessing, God strengthens the mother to promote the prenatal development of her child.
- The blessing also benefits the unborn child. Both mother and child are secure in the hand of the Lord.
- For as long as the child grows in the womb of the mother, it is connected to her in all things. It absorbs whatever the mother introduces into her body, soul, or spirit. Therefore the mother can have a positive influence on the unborn child through prayer and by consciously involving the child in her life of faith.

²² CNAC 12.2.1

Prayer

The minister asks those present to rise, if possible.

The act of blessing begins in the name of the triune God. In the ensuing prayer, the officiant gives thanks to God for the developing new life and asks Him to provide the prenatal blessing.

Dispensation of blessing

After the prayer, the minister dispenses the prenatal blessing with the following words, while laying his hands upon the forehead of the mother:

“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:

- The soul of the unborn child has been created by God. The child is called to be in the image of God.
- Both child and mother are commended to the care of God during the pregnancy.
- May the grace of Jesus Christ accompany both the unborn child and its mother.
- May the Holy Spirit grant the mother the strength to provide for the well-being of the unborn child according to body, soul, and spirit.

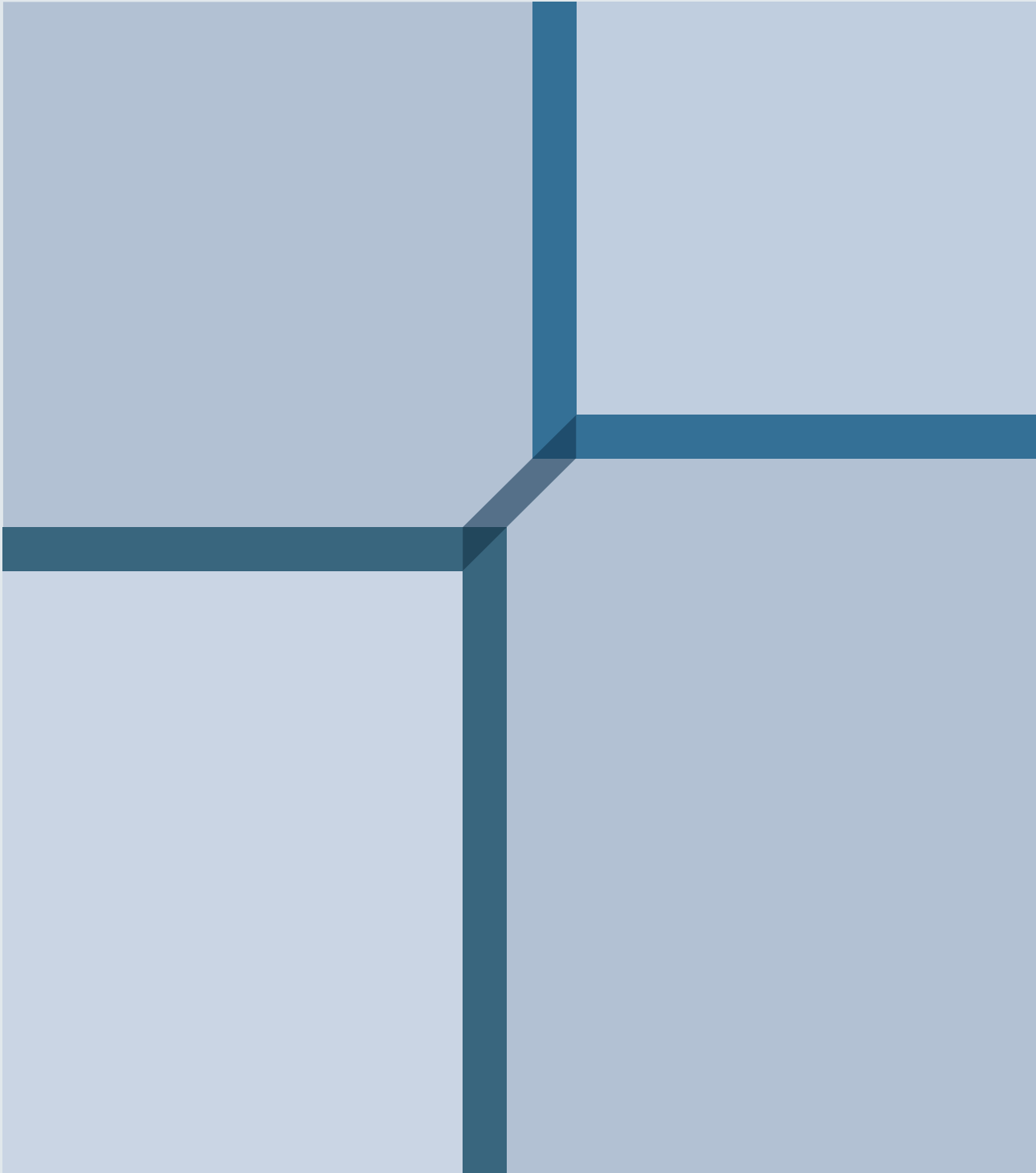
Mandatory conclusion:

*“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.

HOLY ACTS ASSOCIATED WITH MINISTRY AND SERVICE



5.1 Ordination of ministers

Liturgical position

Ordination is the investiture of a spiritual ministry. It is performed in the name of the triune God by the apostolate through laying on of hands and prayer. Authority, sanctification, and blessings are imparted in the ordination.

The ordination 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 bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

Execution

The ordination is performed by an Apostle.

Address

The following content is recommended.

Deacon ministry

- Deacons are designated by God for their ministry.²³
- Personal gifts are blessed and sanctified for service in the Church.
- Within the framework of their ministerial mandate, Deacons receive the authority to
 - properly proclaim the word of God and
 - dispense the Trinitarian blessing (benediction).

²³ Fifth Article of Faith

- They are now part of the ministerial body of the respective congregation and district, and can be entrusted with duties corresponding to their ministry within this area.
- They are called to serve God and their neighbour out of love and with their gifts, and to publicly profess their faith.
- They are to exemplify a lifestyle oriented to the gospel.²⁴

Priest ministry

- Priests are designated by God for their ministry.²⁵
- They are blessed and sanctified to their priestly service.
- In addition to the powers conferred upon ordination to the Deacon ministry²⁶, they receive the ministerial authority to
 - dispense the sacrament of Holy Baptism with water
 - dispense the sacrament of Holy Communion
 - pronounce the forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus Christ in the commission of their sender, the Apostle
 - They are able to perform acts of blessing such as confirmations, weddings, and funerals.

Vow

The officiant asks the congregation to rise. The Apostle then asks the minister to be ordained a question to the following effect:

“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Are you prepared to accept the ministry of a (Deacon/Priest) in the congregation (...) and to exercise it in faithfulness to God, in oneness with the apostolate, and in accordance with the regulations of the Church?”

“Will you align your conduct of life with the gospel of Jesus Christ, serve those entrusted to you in the New Apostolic faith—as it comes to expression in the Creed—in humbleness and love for God and your neighbour? Then vow this with a clear yes.”

²⁴ 1 Timothy 3: 8–13

²⁵ Fifth Article of Faith

²⁶ If the minister has never exercised the ministry of a Deacon before, the powers inherent in the Deacon ministry must also be conferred upon him or her.

Prayer (with epiclesis²⁷)

This prayer can include the following:

- the plea for God's blessing upon this vow
- the plea for strength and the ability to keep this vow and fulfil the duties associated with the ministry
- the plea to God the Holy Spirit to grant blessing, sanctification, and authority

Act

The ministry is received while the candidate kneels before the altar. The Apostle then lays his or her hands on the head of the minister to be ordained and speaks the following words:

“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the Deacon/Priest ministry. Receive from the apostolate of Jesus Christ the authority, sanctification, and blessing required to fulfil all of the duties associated with this ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

27 Invocation of the Holy Spirit

Thereafter the powers associated with the respective ministry are specifically stated.

“Receive the authority ...

- (Deacon ministry:) ... *to properly proclaim the word of God and dispense the Trinitarian blessing at the end of the divine service.”*
- (Priest ministry:) ... *to perform Holy Baptism with water and to consecrate and dispense Holy Communion, as well as to proclaim the forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus Christ and in the commission of your sender, the Apostle. In addition, you are now authorised to perform ecclesiastical acts of blessing.”*

Further words of blessing and sanctification for the minister can follow thereafter:

- May God awaken, strengthen, and multiply the available gifts, and impart additional strengths.²⁸
- With the ministry, which is holy, God grants the minister a share of His holiness. Holy acts can be performed in the power of the Holy Spirit.²⁹
- Proclaim and stand up for the gospel of Christ. Look after the believers entrusted to you for pastoral care, be an example to them, and promote their faith. Accompany them in prayer even in the pressures of natural life.³⁰
- Contribute to the joy of those entrusted to your care and never consider yourself to be a lord over their faith.³¹
- May the joy of the Lord always be your strength.³²
- The angels of the Lord accompany you on all your ways.

Mandatory conclusion:

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

28 CNAC-QA 416

29 CNAC-QA 417

30 CNAC-QA 468

31 2 Corinthians 1: 24

32 Nehemiah 8: 10



Ordination



Ordination

5.2 Appointment of ministers

Liturgical position

An appointment is the allocation of a service associated with a spiritual ministry, which involves a leadership function within the congregation, district, Regional Church, or Global Church.

Appointments take 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 bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

Execution

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

Address

The following basic content is recommended:

District rector

- The district rector is responsible for several congregations in both a spiritual and an organisational respect.
- This implies advocating the doctrine in accordance with the New Apostolic Creed and Catechism, and preaching the gospel in its purity. In addition, he or she will see to it that the other ministers do the same.
- This service includes pastoral care, ensuring pastoral care in the church district, and providing for the spiritual ministries and services (teachers, youth leaders) in the church district.

Congregational rector

- The congregational rector is responsible for one congregation in both a spiritual and an organisational respect.
- This implies advocating the doctrine in accordance with the New Apostolic Creed and Catechism, and preaching the gospel in its purity. In addition, he or she will see to it that the other ministers do the same.
- This service includes pastoral care, ensuring pastoral care in the congregation, and providing for the spiritual ministries and services (teachers, youth leaders) in the congregation.
- Those appointed to congregational leadership see to it that the members of the congregation can engage themselves with their gifts for the benefit of all.

Vow

The congregation is asked to rise. The minister to be appointed is now asked a question to the following effect:

“(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 with a clear yes.”

Prayer (with epiclesis³³)

This prayer can include following:

- the plea for God's blessing upon this vow
- the plea for strength and the ability to keep this vow and fulfil the duties associated with the ministry
- the plea to God the Holy Spirit to grant blessing and sanctification through the appointment

Act

The appointment is received while kneeling in front of the altar. It is received through the laying on of hands upon the head of the minister in question and is performed 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!”



Appointment

33 Invocation of the Holy Spirit

This can be followed by further words of blessing with the following content:

- May God awaken, strengthen, and multiply the available gifts that are necessary for the fulfilment of your leadership task.³⁴
- May God grant you the wisdom to make decisions that will serve for the preservation and growth of the (district/congregation).
- Always perform your duty in love for all members of the (district/congregation) and in oneness with the apostolate.
- Watch 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.

Mandatory conclusion:

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

³⁴ CNAC-QA 416

5.3 Assignment of ministers

Liturgical position

An assignment is the allocation of a service in support of a leading minister. Assignments take place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are to be performed in the following order:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

Execution

Assignments are performed by an Apostle or a priestly minister designated by him or her for this purpose.

Address

The following content is recommended.

Bishop

- The Bishop is the assistant to the Apostle and his or her closest associate, who supports him or her in pastoral care and teaching activities.
- The Bishop may support ministers who have been entrusted with the leadership of districts and congregations, as necessary.
- Members and ministers who need special attention are to receive sensitive pastoral care from the Bishop.

Delegate of the district rector

- The delegate of the district rector is the latter's assistant, and supports him or her in pastoral care and teaching activities.
- If necessary, he or she supports the ministers responsible for the leadership of congregations.
- Members and ministers who need special attention are to receive sensitive pastoral care from the delegate of the district rector.

Delegate of the congregational rector

- The delegate of the congregational rector is the latter's assistant, and supports him or her in pastoral care and teaching activities.
- If necessary, he or she supports the ministers in the congregation in their ministerial activities.
- Members and ministers who need special attention are to receive sensitive pastoral care from the delegate of the congregational rector.

Vow

The congregation is asked to rise. The minister to be assigned is then asked a question to the following effect:

“(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 or her leadership function in (working area), in faithfulness to God, in oneness with the apostolate, and in accordance with the regulations of the Church? Then vow this with a clear yes.”

Prayer (with epiclesis³⁵)

This prayer can include the following:

- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow
- the plea for strength and the ability to keep this vow and fulfil the duties associated with this assignment
- the plea to God the Holy Spirit to help the assigned ministers in this assignment

Act

The assignment is performed standing in front of the altar. The officiating minister shakes the hand of the minister to be assigned and speaks the following words:

“I hereby assign you as a (function: 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 all the duties associated with the respective assignment are listed.
- 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

³⁵ Invocation of the Holy Spirit



Assignment to a service bound to a ministry

5.4 Reinstatement of ministers

Liturgical position

If ministers move to another working area, they must be reinstated in their ministry in this new area.

With respect to liturgy, the reinstatement 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 bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

Execution

The reinstatement of a minister in a priestly or diaconal ministry is usually performed by the district rector.

Act

The reinstatement is performed while the minister stands before the altar. The officiating minister shakes the hand of the minister being reinstated and speaks the following words:

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

5.5 Assignment to services that are not bound to a spiritual ministry (teachers and youth leaders)

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 Pre-Sunday School, Sunday School, Religious Instruction, or Confirmation Instruction—or as the primarily responsible youth leader will be assigned to these services.

Liturgical position

The assignment of members or ministers to a duty that is not bound to a ministry 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 to be performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

Execution

The assignment is performed by the responsible priestly minister.

Address

Among other things, the following content is recommended:

Teachers³⁶

- The teacher has the task of supporting parents in their responsibility of raising their children in the New Apostolic faith.
- This support is provided by instructing the children using the teaching material provided by the Church.
- The teacher is to support the children in developing their own personal faith. This includes emphasising the value of prayer and the divine services and of encouraging them to acquaint themselves with the content of the New Apostolic faith.
- The teacher acts in consultation with, and by mandate of, the district rector or congregational rector.

Youth leaders³⁷

- The youth leader is the personal contact who is to support the young people in their various situations of life and questions of faith.
- They are encouraged to become involved in the congregation's many activities, and to practise, profess, and stand up for their faith in their surroundings.
- The youth leader acts in consultation with, and by mandate of, the district rector or congregational rector.

³⁶ CNAC 12.4.1

³⁷ CNAC 12.4.2

Vow

The congregation is asked to rise. The brother or sister to be assigned is then asked a question to the following effect:

“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Are you prepared to henceforth assist your district rector/congregational rector in humbleness and faithfulness to provide pastoral care to the children/young people? Are you prepared to serve the children/young people entrusted to your care in the love of Jesus Christ? Then vow this with a clear yes.”

Prayer

The prayer can include the following:

- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow
- the plea for strength and the ability to fulfil the associated duties
- the plea to God to support the assigned individual

Act

The assignment is performed while standing in front of the altar. The officiating minister shakes the hand of the designated teacher or youth leader and assigns him or her with the following words:

“I hereby assign you as a (designation: teacher or 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 all the duties associated with the respective assignment are listed.
- Further blessings can be added in conclusion.



Assignment to a service without a ministry

5.6 Termination

5.6.1 Termination of an appointment or assignment of a minister

Liturgical position

The termination of an appointment or an assignment 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 bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

Execution

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

Act

In front of the altar, the officiating minister expresses thanks to the minister in question for his or her service and commitment. Thereafter the officiant shakes his or her hand and releases him or her from the appointment or assignment with the following words:

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

5.6.2 Termination of an assignment to services that are not bound to a ministry (teachers and youth leaders)

Liturgical position

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 to be performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

Execution

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

Act

The officiating minister expresses thanks to the person in question in front of the altar for his or her service and commitment. He or she then shakes the person's hand and terminates the assignment with the following words:

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

5.7 Retirement of ministers

Liturgical position

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 order:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

Execution

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

Act

The officiating minister expresses thanks to the minister in question in front of the altar for his or her service and commitment.

The officiant then shakes the minister's hand and releases him or her from his or her ministerial mandate. In the process, the officiant points out that the ministerial authority remains intact.

This occurs with the following words:

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