

Church of Scotland Guild

Planning a

Service of Dedication

SUGGESTED SERVICE OF DEDICATION FOR LOCAL GUILDS

The beginning of a new session gives a special opportunity for Guilds, individually or with others, to hold a service of re-dedication. This may be a special service, or it may be included within Sunday worship, or be part of a Guild or Council meeting. Clearly, the content of the service should be appropriate to the occasion and you are encouraged to use the current Theme Guide which has sections containing hymns, prayers, suggested readings and other resources appropriate to the Guild theme for the session about to begin.

If you choose rather to hold this service during Guild Week you may wish to use what follows here as your framework and include appropriate material from the Guild Week Pack which is sent to each Guild in good time to help you to plan ahead.

Whenever you hold your service, good planning is vital – publicity out in good time and done imaginatively; a service sheet prepared and copied for everyone; material ordered from Guild Office for everyone to take home; spare copies of your year's programme; refreshments to share after the service....

AIM

“The Church of Scotland Guild is a movement within the Church of Scotland which invites and encourages both women and men to commit their lives to Jesus Christ and enables them to express their faith in worship, prayer and action.”

MOTTO:

“Whose we are and Whom we serve.”

The Guild is a very special part of the Body of Christ and we have every right to feel privileged to be part of this Movement. We can feel proud too: we have been spoken of as a valued Action Group within the National Church and many regularly pay tribute to what we are enabled to achieve in the Name of Jesus Christ. At a local level we share fellowship within our churches and communities and our members and friends look forward to our meetings. From time to time problems arise and the beginning of a new session may present challenges. So the opportunity to hold a service is all the more precious as we acknowledge our dependence on each other and on Jesus Christ whose Spirit enables us.

The Programmes and Resources Committee gratefully acknowledge the work of Miss Esme Duncan, former National Convener, in preparing this material. Thanks are also due to Miss Margaret Browning, some of whose work on an earlier version has been retained.

Suggested Order of Service

Welcome and Introduction

Call to Worship

Opening Praise

Prayers of Approach

Praise

The Word of God

Praise

Sermon or Talk (Optional)

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Prayers for Others

Praise

Offering

Prayers of Dedication

(which may include a Statement of Christian Faith)

Closing Praise

Benediction

Welcome and Introduction:

It is important that everyone feels welcome and that they know what will happen within the service. If you have planned a cup of tea after the service – and hopefully this is possible – give the invitation. If the offering is to be given for, e.g. one of the Guild Projects, intimate this at this point. Thank in advance those who have made the service possible.

Call to Worship:

“Let us worship God” or a short passage from scripture such as Philemon 1:3-6 or the opening verse of a Psalm, e.g. ‘I will extol the Lord at all times, his praise will always be on my lips.’ Ps.34:1

Praise

There is a large selection in the Theme Guide, each hymn chosen to reflect the current theme, so you will be spoilt for choice. It is a good idea to consult at least some of the members of your group beforehand. Printed material is covered by copyright but usually may be photocopied if this is covered by a CCL licence, and the appropriate fees paid. This can greatly increase the range of material available. NB: photocopying of music is not covered by this licence.

Opening Praise: a well known, appropriate hymn of praise sung enthusiastically will give the service a good beginning.

Be still for the presence of the Lord	CH4 189, CG 12, MP 50
(appropriate if the Call to Worship has been spoken rather than sung)	
Ye servants of God, your master proclaim	CH4 130, CH3 372, MP 784
Rejoice, the Lord is King	CH4 449, CH3 296, MP 575
Jesus calls us here to meet him (omit v4)	CH4 510, GP 54, CG 66
Show me thy ways, O Lord	CH3 74
Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us	CH3 90, MP400
Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire!	CH4 598, CH3 122, MP 90

Prayers of Approach

Choose from the Theme Guide or use those printed below:

A Prayer of Adoration

Loving heavenly Father,
creator of heaven and earth
this day, as are all days,
this moment, as are all moments,
is the time to worship you and give you praise.
Open our eyes to the glory of your presence,
attune our ears that we may hear your voice,
expose our minds to the challenge of your truth,
fill our lives with wonder, love and praise.

A Prayer of Confession

God of mercy and grace,
you know all our faults and failings,
the ones seen by all and the ones we hide.
We can be harsh in judging others, but blind to our own faults,
we can be quick to look for praise and recognition of what we do,
but slow to acknowledge the work of others. So often we remain silent rather than speaking words of encouragement.
As we hope to be forgiven, O Lord, teach us also to forgive, And help us, by our deeds and actions, to show love, one for another.
These prayers we make in the name of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Amen.

Praise, other than Opening and Closing Praise

Here are some suggestions for use at various points in the service:

Just as I am, without one plea	CH4 553, CH3 79, MP 396
One more step along the world I go	CH4 530, SGP 90, CG 100
Oh the life of the world is a joy and a treasure	CH4 141, CG 97
Meekness and majesty, manhood and deity	CH4 356, CG 86, MP 465
Look forward in faith	CH4 237, SGP 69, CG73
Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father	CH4 153, SGP 37, CG 43, MP 200

For the fruits of all (<i>His</i>) creation Longing for light, we wait in darkness <i>(Christ be our light)</i>	CH4 231, CG 34, MP153 CH4 543, CG 21
As a fire is meant for burning We cannot own the sunlit sky Christ's is the world in which we move <i>(A touching place)</i>	CH4 252, CG 8 CG 2
Bind us together Lord of creation, to thee be all praise	CH4 724, SGP 21, CG 1
"Take up my cross," the Saviour said May the mind of Christ my Saviour O Jesus, I have promised Take my life and let it be Come down, O Love Divine Brother, Sister, let me serve you	SGP 13, MP 54 CH4 500, CH3 428, MP 440
	CH3 430, CH4 536, CH3 432, MP 463 CH4 644, CH3 424, MP 501 CH4 502, CH3 462, MP 624 CH4 489, CH3 115, MP 89 CH4 694, CG 16

Readings:

Many translations of the Old and New Testaments are available. Some, e.g. The Contemporary English Version, are especially suitable for reading aloud. Some passages can be read by two or more voices and if a copy of the Dramatised Bible is available, consider using it for one of the readings.

If acoustics permit, when two or more readers are used for a single passage, place them in different parts of the church. A selection of readings which might be included in a Service of Dedication is given below.

Old Testament:

Exodus 3:1-17
Joshua 24:14-22
1 Samuel 3:1-10
1 Kings 3:5-15
Psalms 40:1-8
Ecclesiastes 3:1-12
Isaiah 6:1-8
Jeremiah 1:4-10

New Testament: a) Epistle

Romans 8:9-17
Romans 12:1-21
1 Corinthians 1:4-9
1 Corinthians 12:1-11
1 Corinthians 12:12-31a
1 Corinthians 13:1-13
2 Corinthians 8:1-15
Ephesians 6:10-18, 23-24

Philippians 1:3-12

Philippians 3:7-14

1 Peter 1:13-25

1 John 3:11-24

New Testament: b) Gospel

Matthew 5:1-10

Matthew 5:13-16

Matthew 6:24-34

Matthew 10:26-33

Matthew 11:25-30

Matthew 13:10-17

Matthew 20:1-16

Mark 2:13-17

Mark 6:6b-12

Mark 12:28-34

Mark 14:3-9

Luke 5:1-11

Luke 11:1-13

Luke 19:11-27

John 1:1-18

John 6:1-14

John 12:44-50

John 14:15-31.

If an Address is included in the service the choice of readings should influence its content. The speaker should therefore be consulted about the choice of the readings. If there is no Address additional readings could be included.

Praise

The Word of God This may include readings from both the Old and New Testaments as appropriate. If there is a sermon or talk, the reading(s) will obviously be chosen to fit this. It is good to have people other than the leader reading to give a change of voice. The Dramatised Bible might be used, or, if the passage is very familiar, a modern paraphrase such as The Message. The reading should be clearly announced, giving time for the congregation to find the place. Before beginning reading, the reader should say clearly, ‘This is the Word of God.’ Afterwards, the reader should say, ‘Thanks be to God’ or use other appropriate words.

Praise

Sermon or Talk (Optional) Drama might be included. There are often short sketches in the Theme Guide.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Prayers for Others as above, there is material in the Theme Guide or the following from the Suggested Service:

A Prayer of Thanksgiving

Loving heavenly Father,
We thank you for the infinite number of ways
in which you show your love for us.
For the beauty of your creation,
the first flowers of springtime,
the warmth of summer sunshine
the mellow fruitfulness of autumn harvests
the crisp clarity of winter days
For the joy of family and friends,
the shared laughter,
the happy memories,
the comfort we receive in times of sorrow and sadness.
For the fellowship we find within the Guild,
for the challenges which are presented to us,
for the fun we have working together, working to serve you.
Most of all, O Lord, we thank you for sending your Son to live here on earth,
He lived a perfect life, a life without blemish, yet he understands our human faults and failings,

In obedience he went to the cross, that we might know forgiveness,
He rose again, on the third day, that we might have eternal life.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your limitless love.

A Prayer of Intercession

And now, O Lord, we lay before you our concerns for others
our concerns for the world.

We pray for your Church here in Scotland, and throughout the world,
and we ask that you will sustain and bless all who by their words and actions
seek to spread the Good News to all people.

We pray for harmony amongst all
who follow the way of Jesus Christ,
for barriers between denominations to be swept away,
and for all to be united in their aim to serve you, and do your will.
We ask your blessing on organisations within the Church:

(insert your own congregation's organisations here)

And at this time we remember especially the Guild and affiliated groups,
the projects they support at home and abroad.

Guide and inspire all who plan for the future,
and encourage those who deal with the day to day tasks which make it all possible.

We pray for the leaders of nations, communities, industry and the caring services
and we ask that each will use their influence wisely
and with compassion
so that all they do is acceptable to you.

We pray for peace,

for the healing of quarrels and disputes,
within families,
between nations.

We offer our prayers for peace throughout the world,
for an epidemic of brotherly love to sweep through nations.

We pray for all who are ill,
for those who know physical pain,
and for those who suffer mental torment,
And we remember those who, because of advancing years,
are frustrated because their activities are curtailed.

We pray for the bereaved,
those trying to rebuild their lives after the loss of one
for whom they cared dearly,
but who face constant reminders
that there is a gap which cannot be filled.

Heavenly Father,
there are many who have secret sorrows and anxieties
which they feel they cannot share with others.

May all who are weary and burdened with a load of care
find comfort in the knowledge that you know their worries
and that you are always with them.

These prayers we make in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour, Amen.

If there has been some local, national or international catastrophe in the days prior to the service include prayers for the injured, the families of dead and injured, rescue workers etc.

Praise

Offering

Prayers of Dedication (which may include a Statement of Christian Faith)

Particularly if your group is accustomed to hold a Service of Dedication you may choose to begin by asking the Guild members to stand while the whole congregation repeats A Statement of Christian Faith. This “Statement” was authorised for use in worship and teaching by the General Assembly in 1992. It is reprinted below and also can be found inside the back covers of The Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland, published by Saint Andrew Press, Edinburgh, 1994. ISBN 0 7152 0684 2. You will need copies for everyone – best on a screen if this is possible.

A Statement of Christian Faith

We believe in one God:
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
God is love.

We praise God the Father:
Who created the universe and keeps it in being.
He has made us his sons and daughters
to share his joy,
living together in justice and peace,
caring for his world and for each other.

We proclaim Jesus Christ, God the Son:
born of Mary,
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
he became one of us,
sharing our life and our death.
He made known God's compassion and mercy,
giving hope and declaring forgiveness of sin,
offering healing and wholeness to all.
By his death on the cross and by his resurrection,
he has triumphed over evil.
Jesus is Lord of life and of all creation.

We trust God the Holy Spirit:
who unites us to Christ
and gives life to the Church;
who brings us to repentance
and assures us of forgiveness.
The Spirit guides us
in our understanding of the Bible,
renews us in the sacraments,
and calls us to serve God in the world.

We rejoice in the gift of eternal life:
We have sure and certain hope of
resurrection through Christ,
and we look for his coming again
to judge the world.
Then all things will be made new;

and creation will rejoice
in worshipping the Father,
through the Son,
in the power of the Spirit,
one God, blessed for ever. Amen.

*This Statement of Faith was authorised for use in worship and teaching
By the General Assembly in 1992*

Prayers of Dedication

1. Heavenly Father,
We lay before you our offerings of money,
and ask that they be used to further your kingdom here on earth.
We offer the gifts and talents you have given us,
the skills we have acquired.
We offer our whole lives, to your service.
Help us to forget ourselves, but never to forget you,
so that all we do is done for you, in your name, O God.
Save us from self-pity, but give us true compassion for others;
help us to love one another as you love us.
Stop us from being egotistical and instil in us the desire to listen to you, to follow
you,
Keep us from being obstinate, but make us always keen to do your will,
to accept the tasks, the challenges which present themselves to us.
We pray that we will always remember

“Whose we are and whom we serve”. Amen.

or

2. O Lord, our God,
we dedicate ourselves to serve you faithfully,
to love you with all our heart, all our soul and all our mind, and to love one another as
your Son, Jesus Christ, has shown his love for us.
Renew us, refresh us, as we continue on our journey through life.
Be with us, as The Guild constantly faces challenges which lie ahead.
Support us as we decide,
which of the old ways we should preserve, and which new things we should embrace.
Guide our thinking so that tradition is not preserved for its own sake,
nor change introduced just because it is different.
We lay before you our gifts of money.
May they be used wisely to further your kingdom here on earth.

Amen.

Closing Praise – an appropriate hymn chosen from the Theme Guide and expressing commitment. Some suggestions:

Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided	CH4 159, CG 74,
MP428	
I, the Lord of sea and sky	CH4 251, CG 50
Now thank we all our God	CH4 182, CH3 368,
MP 486	
O Jesus, I have promised to serve thee to the end	CH4 644, CH3 434,
MP 501	
Forth in thy Name, O Lord, I go	CH4 529, CH3 462,
MP 159	

Guild Centenary Hymn (*Words can be found in “Help...I’m Leading Worship!” Tune: Regent Square, CH3 354*).

When announcing the closing praise, the invitation to join the Guild for refreshments might be repeated.

Benediction

A selection of hymns and readings suitable for inclusion in a service at which a banner is to be dedicated has also been prepared by members of the Committee and is printed below.

BANNER DEDICATION

Selection of Readings & Hymns

for use in a service at which a banner is to be dedicated.

“Moses built an Altar and called it *The Lord is my banner*: Exodus 17:15 (NIV).

(Thoughts on this verse - a banner has been looked on as a ‘sacred’ thing from earliest times. It was used to guide an army. The standard-bearer leading Moses is declaring that he will follow God’s guidance, the people must lift Him high for others to see and follow. Is this not what we are trying to do in 2000 AD? As relevant today as it was so long ago.

Also in lifting high the banner we are declaring that we are not ashamed to follow it. Therefore, if Jesus is our banner we must not be ashamed to own Him, as the hymn/paraphrase states: *I’m not ashamed to own my Lord.*)

Suggested Readings

Psalm 20:1-9 (v.5 reads):

In the name of our God we will set up our banners. It also goes on to say others have chariots but we have the Lord. (NIV) – (*And we will lift up our banners in the name of the Lord.*).

Isaiah 11:1-12 (NIV): a well-known passage usually stopping at vv. 9-10 states:

In that day the root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the people. The nations will rally to Him and the place of His rest will be glorious.

Isaiah 62 to include vv. 10-11 (NIV):

*Pass through, pass through the gates, prepare the way for the people.
Build up, build up the highway, remove the stones.
Raise a banner for the nations.*

Verse 11 (AV) reads: *behold thy salvation comes*

(GNB): *tell the people of Jerusalem that the Lord is coming
to save you.*

And our salvation comes through God’s son, Jesus Christ Our Saviour, and Lord. His

name and His cross must be raised.

Jesus Himself in St. John's Gospel 12:20-34 confirmed this.

Verse 32 (NIV): *But I when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all men to myself.*

Suggested Hymns

Hymn 73 (Junior Praise): He brought me to his banqueting table
 and his banner over me is love

Hymn 144 (Junior Praise): Joy is the flag flown high from the castle
 of my heart

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