**Sod Turning and Site Dedication**

The following order is for use when a new building is to be erected on a new site. However, it can be adapted for use when an extension is built on an established site or similar variation.

The first public act in terms of a new building often comes after a long period of planning, gathering resources and re-organizing work and spaces. The occasion is usually worthy of all the processions, hymns of praise, trumpets, banners or even sparklers the people want to bring to it.

It is assumed that the following order will be placed at the close of the regular service of public worship, preceding the benediction. The people may process from the place of worship to the site while singing a hymn such as "Ye that know the Lord is gracious" or "Christ is made the sure foundation."

An Order

HYMN

**Call To Build**

When all have assembled at the site, the minister shall lead the service, saying:

According to the grace of God given to me,

like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation,

and someone else is building on it.

Each builder must choose with care how to build on it.

For no one can lay any foundation

other than the one that has been laid;

that foundation is Jesus Christ. *I Cor. 3:10, 11*

**Prayer**

Let us pray.

Almighty and everlasting God;

in times past you have been a firm ground for the faith of your people;

be with us now as we set apart this site

and turn ground for the building of a house

in which the people of your church may meet

to worship you and to be equipped to serve you in the world.

Direct us in all our doings,

that what is begun in your name may be completed,

and in the end serve to glorify your living presence;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Statement**

*A member of the congregation's planning committee may make a brief statement and introduce those from the congregation who have been asked to participate in the sod turning.*

**Sod Turning**

*As each person turns over a spadeful of earth, the people may say, shout or sing:*

**Let us start building!**

**Response**

Leader: God has given us a vision.

**People: The God of heaven is the one who will give us success, and we, the servants of God, are going to start building.\***

**We are members of the household of God.**

**Let us build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.\***

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only king and head of the church, let this broken ground be the site upon which we will raise up a building to the glory of God and where our vision will take shape and form.

**We dedicate ourselves to the completion of this building, that here our vision may grow and that here we may serve our God faithfully and well in our time.**

\**Based on Neh. 2:20a and Eph. 2:20b.*

**Prayer**

Holy God, support your people in the commitment they have made to this work now begun in the strength of your name. Remember in your goodness those who give to this project of their substance and keep safe, we pray, all who will labour here with their hands. And when this task is finished and your house stands complete, may your glory dwell in it for ever as the living presence of your Spirit dwells among your people. **Amen.**

HYMN

*A doxology such as the last verse of "Christ is made the sure foundation" may be sung.*

**Benediction**

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ,

the love of God,

and the communion of the Holy Spirit

be with all of you. **Amen.** *II Cor. 13:13.*

**The Presentation And Narration Of Steps**

*The people may be seated. The clerk or one appointed presents the candidate to the moderator, saying:*

Moderator, I present to you \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

who has offered to serve the church as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

and comes now to be commissioned to this task.

*There may be a brief narration of the steps which brought the candidate and the church to this decision.*

**Mandate And Preamble**

The Moderator shall say one or more of the following Scriptural mandates or similar passages:

Listen to the words of Jesus Christ, who commissions you as he commissioned those who shared his earthly ministry when he said:

Go . . . . and make disciples of all nations,

baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you.

Jesus made this promise to them:

Remember,

I am with you always,

to the end of the age. *Based on Matt. 28:19-20.*

Of himself, Jesus said:

I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness

but will have the light of life. *John 8:12.*

To those who followed him, Jesus said:

You are the light of the world.

A city built on a hill cannot be hid . . . .

In the same way, let your light shine before others,

so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in

heaven. *Matt. 5:14, 16.*

For the welfare of those who answered his call, Jesus taught a new concept of place and order when he said:

A disciple is not above the teacher,

nor a slave above the master;

it is enough for the disciple to be like the teacher,

and the slave like the master. *Matt. 10:24-25.*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

as members of the body of Christ, we rejoice today that you have answered the call to engage in this special ministry as an agent of God's reconciling love in the world. We are thankful to God for the gifts of grace and knowledge which have been given to you. We rejoice that Christ has crowned those gifts with a call to a specific ministry in a particular place where you may exercise your skills and express your faith in Christ so that others may be brought closer to the rule of God. As we commission you to this trust and task, we ask you, before God and in the presence of this congregation, to witness to your faith and purpose by answering these questions.

**Questions**

Do you declare anew your faith in one God, made known in Jesus Christ, to whom the Holy Spirit witnesses in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

**I do.**

Will you, following the example of Jesus, proclaim the good news of God in Christ in word and action among the people where you serve?

**I will, God being my helper.**

Will you rely on the resources of God's grace and continually seek God's guidance in fulfilling your mission?

**I will, God being my helper.**

*The Moderator asks the congregation to stand.*

As members of The Presbyterian Church in Canada, do you promise to uphold \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in this ministry, remembering them in your prayers and giving your support to Presbyterians Sharing?

**We will, God being our helper.**

**Prayer Of Commissioning**

Let us pray.

We praise and glorify you,

Lord God Almighty,

that you have created us and called us to yourself;

you have redeemed us in Jesus Christ your Son;

you sustain our lives and our works

through the presence and power of your Holy Spirit.

We praise and glorify you,

Lord God Almighty,

that you have formed throughout the world

the church to be your chosen people

to declare the praises of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And now we give you thanks for your servant \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

who is willing to go forth in the name of Christ

to serve you as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Spirit of God, anoint \_\_\_\_\_\_\_with power

to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ

in word and action.

Give to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ we pray

good health of body, mind and spirit.

Be present through the joys and sorrows,

the doubts and the triumphs,

the certainties and uncertainties

of the life and ministry to which you call \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

*Here prayers may be offered for the particular people and work to which the person is appointed.*

Hear our prayers, in the name of Jesus Christ, through whom, with whom and in whom, in the unity of the Spirit, all glory and honour is yours, one God, forever and ever. **Amen.**

**The Declaration**

*The Moderator continues:*

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

by appointment of The Presbytery of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

and of (*name other appointing agencies*)

I commission you to serve The Presbyterian Church in Canada as a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

in the name of Jesus Christ, the only head of the church.

May the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

*Here the moderator and other representatives of the church as designated may offer the right hand of fellowship or other sign of peace.*

*The service of worship continues.*