



Intergenerational Worship and Prayer for Mission Experiences

Worship and prayer are at the core of how we live out mission experiences as acts of Christian faith and discipleship. In an intergenerational mission experience, we should be intentional about making sure all are engaging in worship and sharing their gifts. This guide has worship and prayer suggestions for all aspects of a mission experience: before (including commissioning and dedication), during (practices of prayer for life together on a trip), and after (in a service when we return to share with the community). There are also dedication prayers and liturgy that can be used for onsite mission experiences. Carefully consider how you will use these components in the planning and sharing of your mission experiences.

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Commissioning

Services and prayers of commissioning affirm and celebrate the calling of particular persons (or groups) to particular forms of service in the church and the world. The following resources may be used in the Service for the Lord's Day, perhaps as a response to the proclamation of the word or as a part of the sending, or may be used and adapted for other appropriate occasions.

SERVICE OF COMMISSIONING

Adapted from the Book of Common Worship (WJKP, 2018), 518–522.

Sentences of Scripture

The leader addresses all present:

Let us live in a way that is worthy of God's call. Eph. 4:1–6
We share one hope and one calling,
**one body and one Spirit,
one faith and one Lord,
one baptism and one God.**

Psalm 133 (GTG 397, 398; PH 241; PS 137) or another hymn, psalm or spiritual song may be sung.

Call to Discipleship

We are called by God
to be the church of Jesus Christ,
a sign in the world today
of what God intends for all creation.

**The mission of the church is
to share the good news of God's saving love;
to care for people in body, mind, and spirit;
to glorify God through worship and service;
to seek the truth and way of Christ together;
to speak up and take action for what is right;
to be a living sign of the realm of God on earth.**

See Book of Order, F-1.0304

The leader continues:

Jesus calls us to be willing, dedicated disciples.
Discipleship is a way of showing the world
the new life we have in baptism.
Discipleship is a way of giving our lives
in love and service to God.

A leader describes the form(s) of service to which persons are being commissioned.

Those being commissioned may express their hope in accepting God's call.



The leader addresses those being commissioned:

N. [and N.],
God has given you everything you need for this calling
through the grace poured out in baptism.

By grace God saves us,
causes us to grow in faith,
and strengthens us to serve Jesus.

God has called you to serve Jesus.
Show your purpose by answering these questions.

Who is your Lord and Savior?
Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior. *or* Jesus.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple,
obeying his word and showing his love?
I will, with God's help. *or* Yes.

Do you welcome the responsibility of this service
because you are determined to follow the Lord Jesus,
to love neighbors,
and to work for the reconciling of the world? I do. *or* Yes.

Will you serve the people
with energy, intelligence, imagination and love,
relying on God's mercy
and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit?
I will, with God's help. *or* Yes.

Do you, members of N. Church,
confirm the call of God
to N. [and N.]
as _____
in the service of Jesus Christ? **We will. *or* Yes.**

Will you support and encourage them in this ministry? **We will. *or* Yes.**

Commissioning Prayer

Faithful God, in baptism
you claim us as beloved children,
you call us to follow Jesus,
and you fill us with your Spirit
so we can answer your call.
Thank you for leading N. [and N.]



to this time and place.
Teach them your truth,
lead them by your Spirit,
and help them grow
in faith, hope and love
as they serve you.

Other petitions appropriate to specific forms of congregational service (523) may be offered.

**Almighty God,
in Jesus Christ you called disciples
and, by the Holy Spirit,
made them one church to serve you.
Let your Spirit rule your church,
so that we may be joined
in love and service to Jesus Christ,
who, having gone before us,
is coming to meet us
in the promise of your kingdom. Amen.**

Blessing and Charge

The leader addresses those being commissioned:

May the God of peace
make you holy and make you whole
until Jesus comes again in glory.
Alleluia! or Amen.

1 Thess. 5:23

It is appropriate for a deacon to give the charge, using this or other Scripture:

N. [and N.], you are commissioned to service
as _____ .

Whatever you do, in word or deed,
do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God through him.
Amen. or Thanks be to God.

Col. 3:17

If included after the sermon, the service continues with a hymn, psalm, or spiritual song, with the prayers of intercession, or with the celebration of the Eucharist.

BRIEF PRAYER OF COMMISSIONING

Lord, we lift our eyes to you,
the maker of heaven and earth.
Hear our prayers for those
who go forth to serve you:

Based on Psalm 121

List first names and/or describe service.

Guide their steps on this journey
and watch over them night and day.



Keep them in our hearts and minds
even as you keep them in your care.
Bless them as they go out
and bless us all with their safe return.
This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

HYMN/SONG SUGGESTIONS

*See the "Discipleship and Mission" section in *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal* (WJKP, 2013), numbers 718–748. See also corresponding sections in the 1990 *Presbyterian Hymnal*, *El Himnario Presbiteriano*, and *Come, Let Us Worship*.*



Dedication

Services and prayers of dedication are used to offer new projects, places or things to the glory of God in the service of Jesus Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit. The following resources may be used in the Service for the Lord's Day, perhaps as a response to the proclamation of the word or as a part of the sending, or may be used and adapted for other appropriate occasions.

DEDICATING PARTNERSHIPS

Baptism is the foundation for partnership in the body of Christ and the wellspring of our witness and service in the world. Therefore, it is appropriate to dedicate a new partnership in mission at the baptismal font, especially if that partnership involves another Christian church, denomination or organization.

Young children might pour water into the baptismal font or hold banners or signs representing the new partnership. Older children and youth may lead portions of the liturgy.

If a shorter dedication is desired, the closing prayer of dedication may be used alone.

Sentences of Scripture

One or both of the following, or other sentences of Scripture, may be spoken.

1 We know that all things work together for good Rom. 8:28, 39
for those who love God
and are called according to God's purpose.
**Nothing can separate us
from the love of God in Jesus Christ our Lord.**

2 Come to God, like living stones, 1 Pet. 2:4–5
rejected by mortals
yet chosen and precious in God's sight.
**Like living stones, let us be built
into a spiritual house of service.**

A leader describes the partnership being dedicated, relating the issue(s) this partnership seeks to address, the form(s) of service it will involve, and the hopes and visions that have inspired it. Representatives of the partner organization, if present, will have an opportunity to respond.

Appropriate gifts or symbols may be exchanged between those entering into this partnership.

A letter, book or banner may be signed as an expression of commitment.

Prayer of Dedication

Holy and faithful God,
you created us to love and serve you
and to love and serve our neighbors.
By the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
you call us into new communities
of faith, hope and love.
By the power of your Holy Spirit
you bind us together as one



to seek the common good.
Bless the work we begin this day,
bless the partnership(s) we establish,
and let our work together
be a blessing in your world;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

DEDICATING SERVICE KITS

These prayers may be used or adapted for dedicating service kits to be used in the church's mission. They might also serve as models for prayers in other situations.

Younger children might be invited to touch or lift the items being dedicated. Older children or youth may lead the prayers.

Tools

Lord God,
you are the maker of heaven and earth.
We dedicate these tools to you.
Use them to build good things
and use our hands
to help shape your new creation;
through Jesus,
the carpenter's son. **Amen.**

Food

Generous God,
you give us our daily bread.
We dedicate this food to you.
Use it to feed people who are hungry
so everyone will know
the fullness of your grace;
through Jesus,
the bread of life. **Amen.**

Items of Clothing

Holy God,
you dress the fields with flowers.
We dedicate these clothes to you.
Use them to wrap up people
with your kindness and care
and cover the world with love;
through Jesus,
our robe of righteousness. **Amen.**



Clean Water

Great God,
all blessings flow from you.
We dedicate this equipment to you.
Use it to provide clean water,
so people may drink
and never be thirsty;
through Jesus,
who gives us living water. **Amen.**

Books and School Supplies

God of knowledge,
by your wisdom you made all things.
We dedicate these books [and/or school supplies] to you.
Use them to teach your truth
and open people's minds
to the wonders of your world;
through Jesus,
your Word made flesh. **Amen.**

Medical Supplies

God our hope,
all healing comes from you.
We dedicate these medical supplies to you.
Use them to help people
who are hurting or sick,
so they can rejoice in your saving work;
through Jesus,
the great physician. **Amen.**

Solar Energy

God of glory,
you give of light and life to all.
We dedicate this equipment to you.
Use it to share power
with people who are in need
and strengthen us all to serve you;
through Jesus,
the light of the world. **Amen.**

Cleaning Supplies

God of new life,
you are the stillness after the storm.
We dedicate these cleaning supplies to you.
Use them to help people clean up



after times of disaster
and give them the hope to start again;
through Jesus,
who makes all things new. **Amen.**

Care Packages

Eternal God,
you promise never to leave us.
We dedicate these care packages to you.
Use them to bring comfort and joy
to people who are alone or far away
so they will know we love them;
through Jesus,
who is with us always. **Amen.**

Blessing Bags (for people who are homeless)

Faithful God,
you walk beside us wherever we go.
We dedicate these blessing bags to you.
Use them to help people
who have no homes or shelter
and keep them safe from harm;
through Jesus,
the good shepherd. **Amen.**



Practices of Prayer

The mission of the church is a way of praying in action, so that we may “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17) as we love and serve the Lord. The following practices are designed to help frame mission and service as a spiritual discipline — one that draws us closer to God and one another as we practice our faith. Some are intended to be used at the beginning or end of the day’s witness and work; others are ways of praying throughout the day.

DAILY PRAYER

The practice of daily prayer is an ancient rhythm in the life of the church — a way of dedicating our lives and time to God, of dying and rising with Christ as we sleep and wake each day.

The main ingredients of daily prayer are psalms (and other songs), readings from scripture, and prayers of thanksgiving and intercession. Other elements may be included at particular times of day, such as thanksgiving for light (evening), confession (night), thanksgiving for baptism (morning) or prayers at mealtime.

The Book of Common Worship (WJKP, 2018), pp. 825–912, provides resources for daily prayer; the Book of Common Worship Daily Prayer edition (WJKP, 2018) is a portable volume, suitable for travel; this edition includes the daily lectionaries (two options) as well as all 150 psalms.

The basic pattern of daily prayer can be adapted for use with children: sing a song (perhaps based on a psalm), read a brief passage of scripture and ask worshipers to share their thanksgivings and prayers; you might close with the Lord’s Prayer and the sharing of signs of peace.

SENTENCES OF SCRIPTURE

Select a short and appropriate phrase based on a verse from Scripture and teach it to mission participants before the day’s work (or trip). Encourage participants to memorize it and reflect on it throughout their work, and then use the phrase at the end of the day (or trip) to discuss where and how you saw God in action.

You might use one of the options below or select something similar from the daily or weekly lectionary. A call-and-response phrase (non-bold/bold) might serve as a refrain throughout the day (or trip).

Surely the Lord is in this place—the house of God, the gate of heaven.

Love your neighbor as yourself; the Lord is our God.

You shall love the Lord your God with heart and soul and strength.

Lead us in right paths, O Lord, for the sake of your holy name.

Here I am, Lord; send me!

Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a stream.

What does the Lord require? Do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

You shall love the Lord your God, and your neighbor as yourself.

The Lord is with you; nothing is impossible with God.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon us to bring good news to all.

As Jesus loves us, let us love one another.

The Spirit helps us in our weakness, praying with sighs too deep for words

I have been crucified with Christ; now Christ lives in me.

The power of God at work within us will do more than we can imagine.

I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

We love because God first loved us.

Gen. 28:16–17

Lev. 19:18

Deut. 6:5

Ps. 23:3

Isa. 6:8

Amos 5:24

Mic. 6:8

Matt. 5:9

Mark 12:30–31

Luke 1:28, 37

Luke 4:18

John 13:34

Rom. 8:26

Gal. 2:19–20

Eph. 3:20

Phil. 4:13

1 John 14:9



EMBODIED PRAYER

We pray not only with our minds and words, but with heart, soul, strength, and all that we are. Actions are a powerful form of prayer. For example:

- We pray with our hands when we reach out to welcome or help others.
- We pray with our feet when we follow Jesus to new places in mission.
- We pray with our eyes when we see each person as a beloved child of God.
- We pray with our ears when we listen to the stories and feelings of others.
- We pray with our mouths when we give and receive food in hospitality.
- We pray with our bodies when we show up to serve as the body of Christ.

EXAMEN

Briefly review the events of the day (perhaps in blocks of time that follow your itinerary or activities) and offer to God your thanksgivings and prayers around each of these events.

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK PRAYERS

The following prompts for prayer might be used with groups (spoken aloud or praying in silence) or individually (personal reflection or journaling).

Praise and Thanksgiving

I am thankful for _____.

I am happy when I remember _____.

Intercession and Supplication

I pray for _____.

I want God to help _____.

Confession and Lament

I am sorry that _____.

I am sad when I remember _____.

Expectation and Hope

I am looking forward to _____.

I am excited about _____.



Returning from Mission

When a group returns from a mission experience, it is valuable to find opportunities for them to share with the rest of the congregation. This may take place during the Service for the Lord's Day and/or in other events following an experience in mission. These suggestions focus on worship; other congregational events might include an intergenerational Sunday school class, a slide show, a fellowship meal, a show-and-tell time or some combination of those.

Sending in service leads back to gathering for worship — as mission participants were commissioned, they now return to the community of faith to bear witness to God's work in the world. During a prelude, gathering song or opening hymn, members of the mission group might process into the sanctuary, enacting their return from service. Banners or shirts will help to identify participants on the mission team.

OPENING SENTENCES

If the group used Sentences of Scripture during the mission experience (as described above under Practices of Prayer), one or more of these responsive phrases might be incorporated into a call to worship in the Service for the Lord's Day. Children or youth might be leaders, teaching the responses to the congregation. For example:

Love your neighbor as yourself; the Lord is our God.	<i>Lev. 19:18</i>
You shall love the Lord your God with heart and soul and strength.	<i>Deut. 6:5</i>
I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.	<i>Phil. 4:13</i>
We love because God first loved us.	<i>1 John 14:9</i>

GATHERING PRAYER

An opening or gathering prayer, led by a member of the mission team, provides an opportunity to claim new partnerships in mission and new relationships in the body of Christ. For example:

Holy God, you send us forth in service
and call us back to sing your praise.

Thank you for leading us to _____,
for accompanying us in our journey,
and for bringing us safely home.

Thank you for the opportunity
to share in your saving work
with the people of _____.

Thank you for new friendships,
new partnerships in mission,
and new connections in the church.

As we gather to worship this day
help us to bear witness to the good news
of your great love for all the world;
through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.



CONFESSION AND LAMENT

After an experience in mission, participants may need an opportunity to confess their complicity in systems of injustice and inequality, or to lament sorrowful things they have seen or heard. This is true for children and youth as well as adults. A carefully crafted prayer of confession and/or lament will provide a way to offer these feelings in prayer to God. This time of prayer might include visual images, stories or testimony from mission participants.

PROCLAMATION

Members of the mission team, including children, may be invited to read Scripture. Stories from the mission experience — ideally related by participants themselves — may be used as illustrations within the sermon for the day. A particular event or experience might be acted out in worship as a way of bearing witness to God's saving work. Or, with careful preparation, one or more of the mission participants might offer the proclamation, sharing pictures and stories from the experience in connection with the Scripture(s) for the day.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Following an experience in mission, the congregation's prayers of intercession should include petitions for the people, community or organization with whom the mission group served. Ideally, these partners in mission would become a part of the congregation's regular pattern of prayer. These prayers may be voiced by children and youth. For example:

We pray for the _____ family,
that their new home will be a place of peace and joy.

We pray for the people of _____,
that they may have abundant life in you.

We pray for the work of _____,
that they may continue to serve your purpose in the world.

INVITATION TO OFFERING

A special offering may be received in support of the congregation's ongoing engagement in mission, particularly with the people, community or organization involved in the recent mission experience. As a sign of hands-on activity, tools or other equipment used in mission might be placed around the communion table as the congregation's offering is collected.

PRAYERS OF THANKSGIVING

Prayers of thanksgiving for partners in mission may be included as part of the Great Thanksgiving (Eucharistic Prayer) or in a prayer after the offering when the Lord's Supper is not celebrated. These prayers may be voiced by children and youth. For example:

We give thanks for N. [and N.],
for the chance to learn about their lives,
to serve with them in mission,
and for the friendship we now share.

We give thanks for the people of _____,
for the welcome they offered us,
the things they have taught us,
and the joy of our work together.

We give thanks for the work of _____,
speaking up for justice,



dreaming of a better world,
and caring for people in need.

FRUIT OF DAILY PRAYER

The pattern of daily prayer can also inform the way mission teams share with the congregation upon their return. Drawing on the three main ingredients of daily prayer (psalms/songs, Scripture and thanksgiving/intercession) teams might share one or more of the following:

- Songs that they learned or sang during their travels.
- Verses or passages of Scripture that were significant, perhaps with brief interpretation or reflection.
- Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession drawn from their experience in mission (perhaps in the form of photographs, artwork or stories).

HYMN/SONG SUGGESTIONS

See the “Discipleship and Mission” section in Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal (WJKP, 2013), numbers 718–748. See also corresponding sections in the 1990 Presbyterian Hymnal, El Himnario Presbiteriano, and Come, Let Us Worship.

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