

A Liturgy for Pastor Appreciation Sunday
October 13, 2013
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Call to Worship

Leader: We gather today to worship and celebrate the gift of those that God sets before us as pastors.

People: We know that it is God who calls and ordains.

Leader: But is it only our pastor who is called?

People: Certainly not! We are all called by God to do God's work!

Leader: But I thought that's why we pay the preacher?

People: No! We are all called to join in ministry—in ways large and small.

Leader: Don't worry about it—we'll add it to the pastor's to-do list.

People: We are all called; we all have gifts; we all are a part of ministry.

Leader: And what a humbling gift that is! Let us join together to worship our God who has ordained the pastor who stands before us and who calls us to join in God's good work.

Call to Confession

Let us join with one another before God to confess our sins and seek forgiveness.

Prayer of Confession (responsively)

We are thankful, God, for the leadership of our pastor; but we also acknowledge that we too are called to join you in the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

Forgive us, God, when we fail to join you in kingdom building.

The work of the church is for all of God's people.

Forgive us, God, when we neglect to work alongside those you give us as leaders.

God, your requirement to seek justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with you is not meant only for those who live ministry as a profession.

Forgive us, God, when we are careless to the world around us. Strengthen us to serve alongside our pastors as we seek to be humble agents of justice and kindness. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Friends, know the good news! God calls us over and over again—giving us an abundance of ways to join in the kingdom work. When we confess our sin and seek God's forgiveness, God is merciful and just—go and do likewise. Amen.

Prayer for Illumination

Almighty God, you are the beginning of wisdom and knowledge. Open our hearts that we may delight in your Word; and give us grace that we may clearly understand and choose the way of your wisdom; in Jesus' name, Amen.

Prayers of the People/Intercession

Among us God,

There are those who are hurting, who are sick, who are desperate.

We trust that you are bigger than the circumstances we find ourselves in
and ask that where comfort is needed, we can be your arms;
Where peace is needed, we can speak your words;
Where love is needed, we can be your heart.
We lift to you the names of those who need your touch
(*Worshippers may speak names aloud here*)...
We thank you God for being with us
and for your servants who sit in our darkness beside us.
You have heard these names and read those written on our hearts
and for that hearing and knowing we give you praise. Amen.

Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon

- **Psalm 111**
- **2 Timothy 2:8-15**
- **Luke 17:11-19**

Offertory Sentence

God is our provider. What a wonderful thing it is to believe in God and to belong to a faith community! What a gift that the God who provides also calls us to join in ministry. Let us respond to God's bounty and to God's call to us by presenting our gifts for the work of God's church in this place.

Offertory Prayer

Gracious and giving God,

We offer these tithes and offerings

for your mission and ministry in the world, as well as for this congregation.

In our giving, may we be blessed with the knowledge that we make a difference
and the assurance that we ourselves have enough. Amen.

Charge & Benediction

Friends, today we have celebrated the women and men whom God calls to ordained ministry. And certainly we recognize the awesome responsibility that this call brings. But know this: ministry as a profession is not the only call God issues. We are all called by God to usher in God's kingdom. Leave today with a grateful heart remembering those you have learned from and been led by. Leave today humbly seeking the way in which God is calling you. Your response to today's worship begins when you exit this building. Go ready to respond "yes" to all the ways God calls us. Amen.