

A Liturgy for Pastor Appreciation Sunday

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Introduction Words:

Today is Pastor Appreciation Sunday. It is a blessing that God handed down to us such gifted leaders. Today is a service of prayer, gratitude, and encouragement for our pastors.

Call to Worship

Leader: The office of minister of word and sacrament is unique in its responsibility and usefulness in the life of the church.

People: **We come to celebrate these special people we call pastors.**

Leader: God calls persons and sets them apart for this ministry.

People: **We give thanks to the LORD, for the Lord is good. God's love endures forever.**

Leader: The persons who fill this office should be sound in the faith, exemplary in conduct, and competent to perform the duties of the ministry.

People: **We give thanks to the God of gods. God's love endures forever.**

Leader: Persons who become ministers of the word and sacrament are due such respect as belongs to their office, but are not by virtue of their office more holy or righteous than other Christians.

People: **We give thanks to the Lord of lords. God's love endures forever.**

Leader: They share in the same vocation that belongs to all Christians to be witnesses to the gospel in word and deed.

People: **We worship God who alone does great wonders. God's love endures forever.**

Leader: They differ from other Christians only with regard to the office to which they are called, which is their station in life.

People: **We give thanks to the God of heaven. God's love endures forever. Amen**

(Based on the Confession of Faith and Psalm 136, NIV)

Call to Confession

The Scripture call us to be responsive to our pastoral leaders, to listen to their counsel. It says that they are alert to the conditions of our lives and work under God's strict supervision. Scriptures also call us to contribute to the joy of their leadership, not its drudgery. And it asks the question: Why would you want to make things harder for them?

Together let us confess our sins against God and neighbor.

(Based on Hebrews 13:17, MSG)

Prayer of Confession

**Have mercy on us, O God, according to your unfailing love;
according to your great compassion blot out our transgressions.
Wash away all our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin.
For we know our transgressions, and our sin is always before us.
Against you, you only, have we sinned and done what is evil in your sight;
so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.**

Silently confess your transgressions...

**We also recognize that the responsibilities
our pastors have to the congregation are a big task.
Help us to make it easy for them to accomplish this.
Help us to understand that they serve with us in your service
and are not hired help to do ministry. Amen.**

(Based on Psalms 51:1-4, NIV)

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news:
If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness. Thanks be to God.

(1 John 1:9, NIV)

Prayer for Illumination

Dear Lord, we thank you for your presence and you desire to talk to us. We open your powerful word with expectation and gratitude. Your word is as sharp as a surgeon's scalpel, cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey. Nothing and no one is impervious to your word. We can't get away from it—no matter what. Amen.

(Based on Hebrews 4:12, MSG)

Scripture Possibilities for the Sermon

- 2 Timothy 1:11
- Hebrews 13:7

Prayers of the People

We offer now our prayers of thanksgiving and intercession.
We praise you, God our Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
God of grace and love, author of salvation and of eternal life, Savior God,
Look upon your church this morning. We present to you our joys and concerns.

Silently present your joys and concerns...

We especially pray for our pastors today. Help them to maintain physical and emotional health.
Nurture their devotional life and show them how to manage time well,

to balance personal obligations, church duties and family responsibilities.
Help us recognize our ministers' need for rest and affirm the concept that every member is a minister and will not expect the pastors to always be on call.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering

The Scripture says: Freely you have received, freely give.
Let us bring with gladness our offerings to God.

(Matthew 10:9, NIV)

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Living God, receive these offerings we bring to you.
Everything we have, we have received from you.
You are the creator of all, everything is yours and you are the provider for all of us.
We thank you for abundance in our lives. Amen.

Benediction

May the God of peace set you apart for God's work.
May every part of you be set apart for God.
May your spirit and your soul and your body be kept complete.
May you be without blame when our Lord Jesus Christ comes again.
The one who called you is faithful and will do what as promised.
Christian brothers and sisters pray constantly for our pastors
and show your appreciation constantly too.
May you have loving-favor from our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

(Based on 1 Thessalonians 5:23-25, 28)