

ORDER OF COMMISSIONING OF A SEARCH COMMITTEE

Leadership of this liturgy may be shared by a denominational representative and an appropriate officer of the local congregation. The search committee members should be in front of the congregation, standing as they are able.

To the Congregation

The life of a congregation, like our individual lives, can often be best understood as a series of events that respond to the past, occur in the present, and shape the future. These events, however, are never created, developed, or completed by ourselves alone. Life is always influenced by the presence and power of God's Holy Spirit, who leads, directs, challenges, and affirms the faith and life of the people of God.

Today we celebrate a most significant event along the faith journey of this congregation—the commissioning of a committee charged with the responsibility of searching for one who will become the candidate for the position of pastor of this congregation.

Special Times in the Lives of Congregations

The people before you believe in Jesus of Nazareth as Lord and Savior. They are committed to the health, nurturance, and unity of this congregation. They struggle with being faithful, as you and I do. They are people very much aware of their imperfections, and knowledgeable of the grace of God. Led by the Spirit, and in response to their own faith, they have accepted the call to serve among you. They stand before you in witness to their willingness to serve.

Let us hear their words of commitment.

To the Search Committee

It is an honor to be entrusted with responsibility in the life of the church. Having prayerfully considered the responsibilities of the position, are you prepared to serve in Christ's name for the well-being of _____(name of church)_____ and for the glory of God? If so, answer, "I am, with God's help."

Do you promise to exercise your ministry with faith, diligence, integrity, and love in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord? If so, answer, "I do so promise."

To the Church Council/Consistory/Official Board

Board members stand or sit before the congregation as they are able.

You have heard the promise of your brothers and sisters of this congregation. Do you promise to trust their leadership, support them in the ways you are able and to extend to them the love of God in Christ? If you so desire please respond by saying, "I do so promise."

To the Members of the Congregation

Members of the congregation stand or sit as they are able.

Members of _____(name of church)_____, you have heard the promise of those called to serve on the Search Committee. You have also heard the promise of your _____(name of board)_____. Do you promise to support the committee in the ways you are able, and to extend to them the love of God in Christ Jesus? If you so promise, please respond by saying, "I do so promise."

Affirmation of Prairie Association (if a representative is present)

As a representative of Prairie Association of the United Church of Christ, I stand among you to pledge the spiritual, pastoral, and administrative resources of the Prairie Association, as you search for the candidate who will most faithfully and effectively serve with you in this shared ministry of Jesus Christ.

Prayer

To the Members of the Search Committee

Spoken by a Prairie Association representative, if possible.

In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the members of _____(name of church)_____, I announce that you are duly installed in your office as members of the Search Committee for the position of Pastor of _____(name of church)_____.

The Hand of Christian Love

In accordance with the faith and order of this congregation and the United Church of Christ, we extend to you the hand of Christian love, support, and affirmation.

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