

XV. THE DEDICATION OF A CHURCH

The Call To Worship

The congregation being assembled, the minister shall begin the service by say-ing:

Dear Friends in Christ, The Holy Scriptures teach us that God is well-pleased with those who build houses for His worship. Remember how He filled the temple of Solomon with His glory, and how in the second temple He manifested Himself even more gloriously. Further, the Gospels commend the Roman centurion who built a synagogue for the people.

Let us not doubt that God will also approve our purpose of dedicating this place in a solemn manner for the various acts of Christian worship; and let us join in joyful praise to His name that this godly undertaking has been completed and in prayer for His continued blessing upon all who shall worship His name in this place.

Invocation

Then this prayer or some other appropriate prayer shall be offered:

O Eternal God, mighty in power and of majesty beyond our understanding, we reverently bow before You in worship. We know that not even the heaven of heavens can contain You, much less the walls of temples made with hands. Yet we pray that You will be present with us who are gathered together to consecrate this place to the honor of Your great name; separating it from all unhallowed, ordinary, and common uses; and dedicating it for Your service, for the reading and preaching of Your Holy Word, for celebrating Your holy sacraments, and for offering to You the sacrifices of prayer and thanksgiving. Bless this undertaking, all to Your glory and to our good, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn

Let care be taken that this is suitable to this solemn occasion.

It is appropriate that the congregation shall say the Apostles' Creed in unison.

The Old Testament Reading

2 Chronicles 6:1-2, 18-21, 40-42; 7:1-4, or such other lesson may be chosen.

Special Music

The New Testament Reading

Hebrews 10:19-2. or another such lesson may be chosen.

The Sermon

The Offering

Presentation of the Building

Then shall the trustees stand before the altar, and one of them shall say to the minister:

We present this building to you to be dedicated as a church for the service and worship of Almighty God.

Then shall the minister ask the congregation to stand, and he shall say the following:

Beloved Friends in Christ, We rejoice that God has put it into the hearts of His people to build this house to the glory of His name. Let us now dedicate it for its holy uses, setting it apart for the worship of Almighty God and the service of His people.

*Then, all standing, the minister shall say, **the people responding:***

To the glory of God the Father, Creator of heaven and earth;

To the glory of God the Son, Redeemer of the world;

To the glory of God the Holy Spirit, Sanctifier of the faithful;

We dedicate this house.
For the worship of God in prayer and praise;
For the preaching of the everlasting Gospel;
For the celebration of the holy sacraments.

We dedicate this house.
For the comfort of all who mourn;
For strength to those who are tempted;
For light to those who seek Christ's way.

We dedicate this house.
For the hallowing of family life;
For teaching and guidance of the young;
For the perfecting of the saints.
We dedicate this house.

For the conversion of sins;
For the promotion of righteousness;
For the extension of God's kingdom;

We dedicate this house.

In the unity of the holy Christian faith;
In the bond of Christian fellowship;
In charity and good will to all;

We dedicate this house.

In gratitude to all those who love and serve this church;
In loving memory of the saints who have finished their course;
In the hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

We dedicate this house.

Then shall the minister offer extemporaneous prayer or this traditional prayer used at dedications:

Now, O Lord, let Your eyes be open toward this house day and night; and let Your ears be open to receive the prayers of Your children, which they offer to You in this place. May Your rich blessing be upon this building which we have dedicated to Your honor. Grant that here and elsewhere Your ministers may be clothed with righteousness and that Your saints may rejoice in the glory of Your salvation. May we all, with Your people everywhere, grow up into a holy temple in the Lord, and at last be received into the glorious temple above, that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. And to the Father, and to the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be glory and praise forever and ever. Amen.

Benediction

Then shall the minister dismiss the congregation using this or some other appropriate blessing:

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be with you and remain with you always. Amen.

It is appropriate that the Doxology shall then be sung.