

Lutherans For Life

Life Team Leader Installation and Commissioning

This order of service is set within the Divine Service before the Prayer of the Church or preceding the Prayers in the Daily Office. This rite may also be used in other settings (e.g., at a meeting of a congregational auxiliary). In that case, it may begin with the Invocation. The Lord's Prayer should then be inserted immediately prior to the dismissal/blessing. Appropriate hymns may be sung before or at the conclusion of the rite. The pastor of the congregation serves as the presiding minister. Those who are to begin service to the congregation are presented before the pastor. The pastor, standing before the altar if the rite is used in the church, announces the names of those who will be recognized, and he may greet each one individually with a handshake.

The pastor addresses the workers:

- ☐ Dear brother(s) and sister(s) in Christ, you have been trained and certified to serve our Lord as (a) leader(s) of the Life Team at *(name of congregation)*. Through this vocation God Himself will work a Gospel-motivated culture of life in and around our church. Hear what instruction and encouragement Holy Scripture declares concerning those who thus serve Christ's Church:

One or more of the following passages from Holy Scripture are read.

“For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.” (Romans 12:3-8)

“Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.” (Colossians 3:23-24)

“What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers.” (1 Corinthians 3:5-9)

“Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’” (Matthew 25:37-40)

“For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.” (Matthew 10:20)

- ☐ You have the enthusiastic support and trust of this congregation's leadership as well as the expertise and encouragement of the nationwide Lutherans For Life community. In conjunction with these structures and as instruments of our Lord's own working, we ask you to equip us to discover and embrace God's mission in this setting as Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

P Will you remain mindful of your training in accordance with the Word of the Lord and the distinctively Lutheran understanding of every human being's preciousness as declared and demonstrated in the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

R *Yes, by the grace of God.*

P Will you "in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15) and carefully equip us to do this as well?

R *Yes, with the help of God.*

P Will you speak the truth in love to share God's gift of abundant and everlasting life, at every stage and in every state of human existence, from the invisible miracle of conception to the moment of natural death, and lead us to do the same?

R *Yes, with the help of God.*

P Will you assist us in finding motivation, getting education, and taking action to respect and protect all our fellow human beings, especially those endangered by death being used as a solution, and will you pray for our faithfulness and their salvation?

R *Yes, with the help of God.*

P Will you lay aside personal priorities and rest your anxieties upon the Savior; will you resist temptations to contempt and competition, anger and arrogance, individualism and factionalism in this service and will you repent and receive absolution when these evils overtake you; and will you consistently invite and urge us to do the same?

R *Yes, with the help of God.*

P Will you embody this Gospel with patience, compassion, mercy, and commitment?

R *Yes, with the help of God.*

P Will you make faithful and fervent use alongside us of the gifts of forgiveness and fellowship, peace, joy, hope, unconditional acceptance, and eternal assurance and security which our Lord richly supplies in the Scriptures, services, and sacraments of His grace, to grow in the love of the Heavenly Father through Jesus Christ, His Son, for you and for all humankind?

R *Yes, by the grace of God.*

The pastor addresses the assembly:

P Beloved in the Lord, you have heard the solemn promises of this congregation's Life Team leader(s). I ask you now, in the presence of God: Will you support him/her (them) in his/her (their) labors, remember him/her (them) in your prayers, and work with him/her (them) to the best of the abilities God has given you, so that His name may be glorified, His kingdom advanced, His Gospel of Life everlasting extended to all, and His will done among us?

C We will, with the help of God.

The pastor addresses the servant(s):

- P** Brother(s) and sister(s), in the presence of Almighty God and of this congregation, I commission and install you as (a) Life Team leader(s) of *(name of congregation)* in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
- P** Let us pray.
- P** Almighty and everlasting God, You gave Your Son to become flesh and dwell among us that we might have life and have it abundantly. As He stands crucified and risen again for us, ascended and reigning at Your right hand to advocate on behalf of our sinful human race, visit and bless this (these) Life Team leader(s) who will open his/her (their) mouth(s) and defend the poor and needy. Make us attentive to his/her (their) efforts, and make every vulnerable one receptive to his/her (their) care and ours. Impart Your Holy Spirit to this Gospel witness to change hearts and save lives. Sustain our Life Team leader(s) in adversity, sorrow, and persecution by the same grace that gives value to all humankind, and grant gladness and wonder to his/her (their) service, until he/she (they) abide(s) evermore in this faith and receive(s) the crown of Your heavenly kingdom as his/her (their) reward; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

- P** Go in the name of the Lord. “[B]e steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.” Be confident “that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (1 Corinthians 15:58, Philippians 1:6). The almighty and most merciful God, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C Amen.

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