

A MANUAL FOR MINISTERS

**Assemblies Of God Inc
Nottingham**

THE MINISTERS' MANUAL

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PREFACE

This manual is the second publishing, edited and revised by Bruce Millar, for downloading from the Assemblies of God and Elim Pentecostal Churches web sites. The first publishing was the result of a commission by the Assemblies of God and Elim Executive Councils to republish their Ministers' Manual. In 1990 a committee was formed, comprising John Glass, John Lancaster, Paul Mercy and Paul Weaver. During the course of the work Dr. William Kay helped extensively and contributions were received from Gordon Bailey B.A., M.B.I.M., John Boyers B.A., Desmond Cartwright, Andrew Colthart and Joy Gascoigne. We are indebted to all concerned for their valuable contributions.

The manual has been written to help ministers in the pursuit of their duties, largely in connection with the conducting of official ceremonies. The guidelines which it contains are the result of a consideration of biblical directive, precedent and Pentecostal heritage. The advice and information supplied should provide a valuable support to help both experienced and less-experienced ministers in the fulfilment of their responsibilities. Biblical quotations throughout the manual are taken from the New International Version of the Bible as this is considered to be by far the most commonly used version in Pentecostal circles.

The manual has been compiled to serve only as a guide, bearing in mind that excessive formality and rigid adherence to set forms of service may restrict the working of the Holy Spirit. The minister should feel free to adapt the contents of the manual where appropriate. Pentecostal believers recognise that the Holy Spirit works in a rich variety of ways and as a result, no two services are alike. He will guide the minister in adapting his message, in choosing the appropriate scriptures,

hymns and songs, and in using the occasion for the edification, comfort and blessing of God's people and for the salvation of those who do not yet know him.

Nevertheless, special occasions, customs, and sometimes, legal requirements demand that some form of service be recognised in the interests of dignity, decorum, and general concern for the participants. Indeed, in the case of the marriage ceremony, the law requires that certain sentences are precisely worded. (The appropriate section of the manual draws attention to these.) It is our sincere prayer that this manual will assist our ministers in being sensitive both to the leading of the Spirit and to the dignity which such occasions demand.

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Before a wedding takes place it is highly desirable that the prospective bride and bridegroom be given pre-marital counselling. The ceremony lasts for a short time; the marriage is for life. The minister's responsibility is not merely to prepare the couple for the wedding itself, but for their married life together. It is often helpful if the minister's wife can be involved with this, but if the minister is unmarried, he may feel that it is more appropriate to ask a spiritually mature couple to do the counselling. Post-marital counselling can also be helpful, for example, six months after the wedding. Please refer to the separate section on the AoG Leadership Website for marriage courses.

Helping an engaged couple to plan their wedding service can be an important part of the pastoral care offered in preparation for marriage. The wedding ceremony is also an ideal opportunity for a sensitive presentation of the gospel.

BEFORE THE CEREMONY

1. Arrange a date and time for the ceremony with the couple.
2. Advise the couple of procedure at the register office:
 - a) Documentation required:
 - i) The minimum legal age for getting married is 16 years old. In England and Wales the written consent of the parents or Guardians is required for persons who have not reached 18 years old and have not been

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previously married. If either of the persons is below 18 a birth certificate must be produced.

- ii) Documentary evidence of name, age, nationality and address must be provided by both parties. Current and valid passports (or birth certificates plus some other form of identification) are ideal for the first three points, and a utility bill or bank statement with the party's name and current address dated within the previous six months will satisfy the fourth. If a change of name has taken place, documentary evidence must also be provided. In all cases original documents must be presented as photocopies are unacceptable.
 - iii) If one (or both) of the parties is a foreign national (that is: is not a British citizen or a national of a European Economic Area (EEA) country) who does not possess a certificate of entitlement giving him or her settled status in the UK, such as indefinite leave to enter or remain, he or she is subject to immigration control and will not be able to give notice of intention to marry unless:
 - he or she possesses an entry clearance as either a fiancé or fiancée granted expressly for the purpose of marriage, usually shown as a visa in that person's passport or travel document. This applies even if he or she is a national of a country where there is normally no need for a visa to enter the UK.
- and*
- he or she possesses a certificate of approval

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from the Home Office to marry in the UK. To qualify for a certificate of approval, he or she must normally have been granted leave to enter or leave to remain in the UK for more than six months and three months of that leave must remain. Failure to qualify requires return to his or her country of origin or country in which he or she is normally resident, from which application can then be made for a visa to the British Embassy, Consulate or High Commission in that country.

The application form for the certificate of approval is available for download on the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) website:

www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk

or it may be requested by telephoning **0870 241 0645**

All applications with supporting documents have to be made by post as it is not possible to apply in person at IND's Public Enquiry Office for this service. Between 20 and 70 working days should be allowed for the application to be processed.

If both people getting married are subject to immigration control, they each need to make separate applications for a certificate of approval each paying the appropriate fee.

The certificate of approval is valid for three months from the date of issue or to the date when the visa expires, if this is less than three months. During this

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time, the couple must give notice to marry at a designated Register Office — a list of these offices is available on the General Register Office website and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate website.

In England and Wales, both parties must have at least seven days residence in a registration district before giving notice/s to marry and must attend the registration office in person together. In Scotland and Northern Ireland, notice to marry may be given by post and normally does not require attendance in person but the couple may be asked to attend the register office before the wedding.

The certificate of approval is surrendered to the registrar when giving notice to marry. Those planning to marry in Scotland or Northern Ireland, if giving notice by post rather than in person, will need to photocopy the sticker in the appropriate passport/s and send it with the marriage notice papers.

The certificate of approval allows the giving of notice to marry but it does not mean the person will be guaranteed leave to remain in the UK as a husband or wife following the marriage.

For more information about certificates of approval

Email:

indpublicenquiries@ind.homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk
or write to:

Immigration and Nationality Directorate

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Lunar House,
40 Wellesley Road
CROYDON
CR9 2BY

General Enquiries phone: 0870 606 7766

- iv) If previously married, evidence of how that marriage ended is required, (the original document must be produced as photocopies are not acceptable) i.e.,
 - divorce (Decree Absolute)
 - death (Death certificate).
 - v) Registration fees.
- b) Preliminaries to marriage:
- i) Marriages may take place on the authority of a certificate (or certificates) issued by Superintendent Registrars or their deputies.
 - ii) If the couple live in the same registration district in which your church is located, both of them must have lived there for a minimum of seven days and each must apply, in person, at least 15 clear days before the wedding to give notice to the Superintendent Registrar of the intended marriage, after which period the certificate is issued. For example, if notice is given on 1st July, the wedding can take place on 17th July. A separate fee is payable for each notice.
 - iii) If the couple live outside the registration district in which your church is located, they may still marry there provided one of them can satisfactorily

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demonstrate to the Superintendent Registrar that they regularly worship at your church, or there is no church of their denomination in their district.

- iv) In cases where one party is from a different residential or registration district, he or she must have been a minimum of seven days resident in that district before giving separate similar notice to its Superintendent Registrar and the Certificate obtained. A fee is payable for this notice.
 - Where this party is resident in Scotland, although no residency rules apply, notice must still be given to the district Registrar in Scotland 15 clear days before the wedding and the Registrar's Certificate of No Impediment obtained.
- v) In unusual cases, such as one party's serious or terminal illness or other exceptional difficulty, it is possible to apply for a Waiver to the normal 15 day notice period and further details can be obtained from your local Superintendent Registrar. The application for a Waiver incurs a fee that is non-refundable if the application fails.

NOTE: Unless your church has its own authorised person, a Registrar must be present and in such cases it is advisable to apply at least one month before the intended wedding date, although couples can give notice up to twelve months before their marriage. (Details of how to become an authorised person may be obtained from the local Register Office.)

3. See the couple on the Sunday prior to the wedding and

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check fully all details on the certificates or licences. In particular, where the minister is an Authorised Person, in the presence of both parties and by direct questioning, verify the following by asking three questions:

“What is the name by which you are known, and have you been known by any other name?”

The names and surnames must agree with those on the certificates. If there is any discrepancy you must question that party further. If that party is not identifiable from the name on the certificate you will be justified in postponing the marriage. If a satisfactory explanation can be made for the discrepancy the marriage may proceed.

“How old are you?”

Both parties must be over the age of 16 years on the day the certificate applies otherwise the marriage must be postponed.

“Have you been through any form of marriage in this or any other country?”

The marital status must agree with what is recorded on the certificates. If there is any discrepancy you must question that party further. If in doubt contact the superintendent registrar who issued the certificate. If there is no question that the identity of the party is affected by the discrepancy and at the time of the marriage evidence is produced that the party is free to marry, the ceremony may proceed. However, where the evidence produced relates to a divorce obtained outside the United Kingdom, Isle of Man or Channel Islands, the General Register Office (Marriages

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Section) should be contacted for advice.

Where the minister is not an Authorised Person, it is wise to ask these three questions, but where there are discrepancies of any kind, it is essential to refer these to the superintendent registrar for a decision on whether to proceed with or postpone the wedding.

4. A tidy and conveniently situated room should be designated for the signing of the register. Failing this, a table should be placed near to where the ceremony will take place.

Certain legal requirements must also be fulfilled:

1. The church must be registered for marriages, and be within the registration district or one of the registration districts in which notice is given, unless the Certificate specifies otherwise. In Scotland, the minister needs to be registered (see MARRIAGES IN SCOTLAND section).
2. The prescribed interval of time between the date of entry in the Marriage Notice book and the day the Certificate was issued must have elapsed; otherwise the marriage must be postponed.
3. The Certificate (which is valid for twelve calendar months from a given day, and expires at midnight on the corresponding day of the twelfth month) must be signed by the Superintendent Registrar (or deputy) who issued it, or the marriage must be postponed. Where there are two documents with different expiry dates, the marriage must take place on or before the earlier expiry date.

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4. There must be no legal impediment to the marriage.
5. An Authorised Person or Registrar must be present to witness and register the marriage. The Authorised Person need not be the minister conducting the service.
6. Both parties must be present at the ceremony, able to recognise each other and enter into the marriage contract knowingly and willingly. If there is doubt, the marriage must not take place.
7. In addition to the Authorised Person or Registrar and the couple being married there must be at least two other people present during the ceremony who are able to act as credible witnesses.
8. The public must have unrestricted access to the church during any marriage ceremony (the doors of the church need not actually be open provided that they are not closed so as to prevent people from entering).
9. The marriage may be solemnised any day of the week, including Sunday, Bank Holidays and Christmas Day, but the service must be held between 8.00 a.m. and 6.00 p.m. (Registration of the marriage may take place after 6.00 pm provided the declaratory and contracting words have been exchanged before that time.)
10. Any Certificate or Certificates issued by a Registrar as the legal authority for the marriage must be in the possession of the Authorised Person in whose presence the marriage is to be solemnised, otherwise the Authorised Person cannot allow the marriage to take place.

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11. It is absolutely essential to the validity of the marriage that the couple each make the following solemn declaration legally known as the *Declaratory Words*:

I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I, A.B., may not be joined in matrimony to C.D.

Or

I declare that I know of no legal reason why I, A.B., may not be joined in marriage to C.D.

Or

by replying “**I am**” to the question “**Are you, A.B., free lawfully to marry C.D.?**”

12. The couple’s vows must include the following legal *Contracting Words*:

I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, A.B., do take thee, C.D., to be my lawful wedded wife (or husband).

Or

I, A.B., take you, C.D., to be my wedded wife (or husband)

Or

I. A.B., take thee, C.D., to be my wedded wife (or husband)

(All legal declarations are indicated throughout the manual in bold print.)

For the legal declarations, the full names, including surnames, which the parties use and by which they are generally known, should be used. If these differ from the names given on the Certificate(s), the difference must be cleared by the Authorised Person or Registrar before the marriage takes place. These words must be said in the presence of the Authorised Person or Registrar and of the witnesses to the marriage.

Details of Registration and the necessary Certificate(s) are not given here as they are the responsibility of the Authorised Person or Registrar.

Persons who are hearing and/or speech impaired should bring an interpreter with them or write out and sign the solemn declaration and the contracting words (see paragraphs 11 and 12 above). Provision exists for the marriages of those who are housebound (through illness or disability) or detained (for example, in prison or a mental hospital) and for the terminally ill. On these matters, the advice of the local registrar should be sought.

The law concerning marriage is subject to change, though at the time of writing no revision is anticipated for the foreseeable future. It is essential that everyone conducting marriage services is aware of, and complies with, the requirements of the law currently in force.

Extracts from the Marriage Act 1949, the Marriage Ceremony (Prescribed Words) Act 1996 and the Nullity of Marriage Act 1971

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Regarding the statutory requirements for marriages in a registered building the formulae and only formulae required are set out in Section 44(3) of the Marriage Act 1949 which is set out below.

Section 44(3) of the Marriage Act specifies the precise words which are required by Statute to be spoken at a marriage in a registered building, that is, a building authorised for the solemnisation of marriages otherwise than according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England.

The following is an extract of the wording of the Act:

(3) Where a marriage is solemnised in a registered building each of the persons contracting the matrimony shall, in some part of the ceremony and in the presence of witnesses and the registrar or authorised person, make the following declaration:

'I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I, A. B., may not be joined in matrimony to C.D.'

and each of them shall say to the other:

'I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, A.B., do take thee, C.D., to be my lawful wedded wife, (or husband).'

This Act has been modified by the Marriage Ceremony (Prescribed Words) Act 1996. The following is an extract of the wording of the Act:

1. – (1) In section 44(3) of the Marriage Act 1949 (which sets out a declaration and words of contract required to be made

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and used by the parties in the course of a marriage ceremony in a registered building) for the proviso thereof there shall be substituted -

“(3A) As an alternative to the declaration set out in subsection (3) of this section the persons contracting the marriage may make the declaration either –

by saying **“I declare that I know of no legal reason why I [name] may not be joined in marriage to [name];** or

by replying **“I am”** to the question put to them successively **“Are you [name] free lawfully to marry [name]?”;**

and as an alternative to the words of contract set out in that subsection the persons to be married may say to each other **“I [name] take you [or thee] [name] to be my wedded wife [or husband]”.**”

With regard to the form of names to be used in the declaratory and contracting words the Registrar General's view is that the use of the terms 'A.B.' and 'C.D.' in the Act is intended to denote that both Christian and surnames should be recited.

Extract from the Marriage Act 1949

Void Marriages

49. If any persons knowingly and wilfully intermarry under the provisions of this Part of this Act —
- a) without having given due notice of the marriage to the superintendent registrar;
 - b) without a certificate for marriage having been duly issued by the superintendent registrar to whom notice of

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- marriage was given;
- c) without a licence having been so issued, in a case in which a licence is necessary;
 - d) on the authority of a certificate which is void by virtue of subsection (2) of section thirty-three of this Act;
 - e) in any place other than the church, chapel, registered building, office or other place specified in the notice of marriage and certificate of the superintendent registrar;
 - f) in the case of a marriage in a registered building (not being a marriage in the presence of an authorised person), in the absence of a registrar of the registration district in which the registered building is situated; or
 - g) in the case of a marriage in the office of a superintendent registrar, in the absence of the superintendent registrar or of a registrar of the registration district of that superintendent registrar;

NOTE: The Deregulation (Validity of Civil Preliminaries to Marriage) Order 1997 amends the Marriage Act 1949 so that a marriage may be solemnized up to twelve months after entry of notice given to a superintendent registrar in the marriage notice book. The relevant period was previously three months. Any marriage not solemnised within twelve months from the date of entry of the notice in the marriage notice book shall be void.

The extended period of validity of civil preliminaries to marriage does not apply to the marriage of a person who is housebound or detained, or to marriages where one of the parties is resident in Scotland or Northern Ireland.

Extract from the Nullity of Marriage Act 1971

Grounds on which a marriage is void:

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1. A marriage which takes place after the commencement of this Act shall be void on the following grounds only, that is to say —

- a) that it is not a valid marriage under the provisions of the Marriage Act 1949 to 1970 (that is to say where—
 - i) the parties are within the prohibited degrees of relationship;
 - ii) either party is under the age of sixteen; or
 - iii) the parties have intermarried in disregard of certain requirements as to the formation of marriage);
- b) that at the time of the marriage either party was already lawfully married;
- c) that the parties are not respectively male and female;
- d) in the case of a polygamous marriage entered into outside England and Wales, that either party was at the time of the marriage domiciled in England and Wales. For the purposes of paragraph (d) of this section a marriage may be polygamous although at its inception neither party has any spouse additional to the other' (Section 4, Matrimonial Proceedings (Polygamous Marriages) October 1973).

Grounds on which a marriage is voidable:

2. A marriage which takes place after the commencement of this Act shall be voidable on the following grounds only, 'that is to say—

- a) that the marriage has not been consummated owing to the incapacity of either party to consummate it;
- b) that the marriage has not been consummated owing to the wilful refusal of the respondent to consummate it;
- c) that either party to the marriage did not validly consent to it, whether in consequence of duress, mistake,

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- unsoundness of mind or otherwise;
- d) that at the time of the marriage either party, though capable of giving a valid consent, was suffering (whether continuously or intermittently) from mental disorder within the meaning of the Mental Health Act 1959 of such a kind or to such an extent as to be unfitted for marriage;
 - e) that at the time of the marriage the respondent was suffering from venereal disease in a communicable form;
 - f) that at the time of the marriage the respondent was pregnant by some person other than the petitioner.

MARRIAGES IN SCOTLAND

A minister in Scotland must register as such at the General Register Office for Scotland, New Register House, EDINBURGH. EH1 3YT.

There is no particular form of ceremony for a religious marriage laid down in any of the Marriage Acts pertaining to Scotland. The Marriage (Scotland) Act 1939, however, which introduced valid and regular marriage by an authorised registrar, in his office only, laid down that the contracting parties must make the following declarations in the presence of the registrar and two persons over the age of sixteen as witnesses:

- (1)that they know of no legal impediment to their marriage and
- (2)that they accept each other as husband and wife.

Marriage conducted by a minister, clergyman, pastor or priest must be preceded by either

- (a)proclamation of banns in a church of the Church of Scotland,
- or
- (b)publication of notice at a registrar's office,
- or
- (c)Sheriff's licence.

The statutory requirements may be obtained from the authorised registrar in the District.

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GUIDELINES FOR THE CEREMONY

Since wedding ceremonies can vary greatly, depending on the ages and circumstances of the bride and bridegroom, it is vital to ensure beforehand that the material to be used does not contain anything inappropriate to the couple concerned. The couple may prefer to read their vows from previously prepared cards instead of repeating them after the minister.

Various customs have become part of the marriage service, but it is not necessary to follow them rigidly, if at all. For example, the customary arrival of the bride after the bridegroom may be varied by the entrance of the couple in the church at the beginning of the service. In a church with more than one aisle, the bride may walk down one side and the bridegroom down the other to meet at the front. The custom of the bride being given away by her father may be omitted, repeated for the bridegroom, or extended to include other members of the couple's families and the whole congregation.

SEATING AND PROCESSIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Front seats should be reserved for the bridal party and relatives of the bride and bridegroom. It is customary to seat relatives of the bride on the left-hand side entering the church and relatives of the bridegroom on the right-hand side entering the church.

Ushers should be suitably positioned:

- a) in the porch, awaiting the bridal party. On the arrival of the bridal party at the door, one of the ushers should be ready to give a sign to the musician(s) to commence playing the accompanying music.
- b) to receive the guests and to give out orders of service.

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- c) to see to the seating arrangements of the bridal party and relatives and to see to the placing of the cushions on which the bride and bridegroom will kneel.

Position of the bridal party:

Bride and bridegroom in the centre, facing the minister

Bride on the left-hand side of the bridegroom Best man on the right-hand side of the bridegroom Bride's father (or relative) on the left-hand side of the bride

Chief bridesmaid and other bridesmaids behind the bride

At the conclusion of the ceremony, the bridal party will leave for the signing of the register. If a musical item is to be included in the service it may well take place at this point.

Order of leaving the church after the service:

Bride and bridegroom

Best man and chief bridesmaid

Other bridesmaids

Bride's father (or relative) and bridegroom's mother

Bridegroom's father and bride's mother

THE SERVICE

The usual order is:

1. Introduction
2. Declaration of no impediment
3. Question of intent
4. 'Giving away'
5. Vows
6. Giving of ring(s)
7. Declaration of marriage
8. Prayer

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9. Blessing
10. Address
11. Signing of the register

ORDER OF SERVICE

The service should begin with prayer.

A hymn may follow.

The minister addresses the congregation

We are gathered together in the sight of God and in the presence of one another to join together this man and woman in holy matrimony and to seek God's blessing and grace on their behalf.

At this time let us remember that marriage is more than a civil contract, a social convention or a religious ceremony. It was ordained by God from the beginning as the sacrament of human society for the mutual fellowship, help and comfort of husband and wife in prosperity and adversity, for the honourable procreation of children, and for their training in love and obedience to the Lord.

Marriage is declared by God to be honourable in all, so we must conclude that it must not be regarded in a light manner, but must be undertaken and entered into in all solemnity, with wisdom and forethought, reverently and in the fear of God.

Into this holy bond these two persons here present are now to be joined. Therefore, if any person can show any just cause why they may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter for ever hold his peace.

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The minister addresses the bride and bridegroom

I require and charge you both, as you will answer at the Day of Judgement when the secrets of all hearts are made known, that if either of you knows of any lawful impediment why you may not be joined in marriage, you confess it now.

The bridegroom repeats after the minister

I do solemnly declare/ that I know not/ of any lawful impediment/ why I, A.B.,/ may not be joined in matrimony/ to C.D.

The bride repeats after the minister

I do solemnly declare/ that I know not/ of any lawful impediment/ why I, C.D.,/ may not be joined in matrimony/ to A.B.

The minister asks the bridegroom

A.B., will you take C.D. as your wife to live together in marriage according to God's laws? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and keep her in sickness and in health and, forsaking all other, keep only unto her as long as you both shall live?

The bridegroom replies

I will.

The minister asks the bride

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C.D., will you take A.B. as your husband to live together in marriage according to God's laws? Will you love him, comfort him, honour and keep him in sickness and in health and, forsaking all other, keep only unto him as long as you both shall live?

The bride replies

I will.

The minister asks

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

The reply is given

I do.

The minister may receive the bride from the hands of her father (or relative). The bride and bridegroom face each other. The bridegroom takes the bride's right hand in his and repeats after the minister

I call upon these persons here present/ to witness that I, A.B./ do take thee, C.D./ to be my lawful wedded wife/ to have and to hold from this day forward/ for better, for worse/ for richer, for poorer/ in sickness and in health/ to love and to cherish/ until death us do part/ according to God's holy ordinance/ and thereto I give you my promise.

The bride repeats after the minister

I call upon these persons here present/ to witness that I, C.D./ do take thee, A.B./ to be my lawful wedded

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husband/ to have and to hold from this day forward/ for better, for worse/ for richer, for poorer/ in sickness and in health/ to love and to cherish/ until death us do part/ according to God's holy ordinance/ and thereto I give you my promise.

The minister now receives the ring from the best man and gives it to the bridegroom, who places it on the third finger of the bride's left hand and repeats after the minister

I give you this ring/ as the token and memorial/ that I have taken you to be my wife.

Where two rings are used, the bridegroom takes the appropriate ring, places it on the third finger of the bride's left hand and repeats after the minister

I give you this ring/ as the token of the covenant/ made between us this day/ and as a pledge of our mutual love.

The bride takes the other ring, places it on the third finger of the bridegroom's left hand and repeats after the minister

I give you this ring/ as the token of the covenant/ made between us this day/ and as a pledge of our mutual love.

If preferred, where two rings are used, the bride and bride groom may repeat the words 'I give you this ring...' together.

The minister says

For as much as A.B. and C.D. have consented together in holy matrimony before God and in the presence of this company, and have pledged faithfulness to each other by the

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giving and receiving of a ring and by joining hands, I now pronounce them husband and wife in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together let no man put asunder.

The bride and bridegroom kneel. The minister lays his hands on them and commends them to God in prayer.

The use of the following is at the discretion of the minister

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face towards you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:4-13)

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each

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other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. (Ephesians 5:22,23,25,28)

The address may follow at this point.

A hymn may be sung.

The bridal party then proceeds for the signing of the register.

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

ALTERNATIVE ORDER OF SERVICE

The service should begin with prayer.

A hymn may follow.

The minister addresses the congregation

We have come together in the presence of God to witness the marriage of A.B. and C.D., to ask his blessing on them and to share their joy. Our Lord Jesus Christ was himself a guest at a wedding in Cana in Galilee and, through his Spirit, he is with us now.

The Scriptures teach us that marriage is a gift of God in creation and a means of his grace, a holy mystery in which man and woman become one flesh. It is God's purpose that, as husband and wife give themselves to each other in love throughout their lives, they shall be united in that love as Christ is united with his Church.

Marriage is given that husband and wife may comfort and help each other, living faithfully together in need and in plenty, in sorrow and in joy. It is given that with delight and tenderness they may know each other in love. It is given that they may have children and be blessed in caring for them, and bring them up in accordance with God's will, to his praise and glory.

In marriage, husband and wife belong to one another and begin a new life together within the community. It is a way of life that all should honour and must not be undertaken carelessly, lightly or selfishly, but reverently and responsibly and after serious thought.

This is the way of life, created and hallowed by God, that A.B. and C.D. are now to begin. They will each give their

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consent to the other. They will join hands and exchange solemn vows and, in token of this, they will give and receive a ring.

Therefore, on this their wedding day, we pray with them that, strengthened and guided by God, they may fulfil his purpose for the whole of their earthly life together.

The minister addresses the congregation

But first, I am required to ask anyone present, who knows a reason why these persons may not lawfully marry, to declare it now.

The minister addresses the couple

The vows you are about to take are to be made in the presence of God, who is the judge of all and who knows all the secrets of our hearts; therefore, if either of you knows a reason why you may not lawfully marry, you must declare it now.

The bridegroom repeats after the minister

I do solemnly declare/ that I know not/ of any lawful impediment/ why I, A.B.,/ may not be joined in matrimony/ to C.D.

The bride repeats after the minister

I do solemnly declare/ that I know not/ of any lawful impediment/ why I, C.D.,/ may not be joined in matrimony/ to A.B.

The minister asks the bridegroom

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A.B., will you take C.D. to be your wife? Will you love her, comfort her, honour and protect her, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to her as long as you both shall live?

The bridegroom replies

I will.

The minister asks the bride

C.D., will you take A.B. to be your husband? Will you love him, comfort him, honour and protect him, and, forsaking all others, be faithful to him as long as you both shall live?

The bride replies

I will.

The minister asks

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

The reply is given

I do.

The minister may receive the bride from the hands of her father (or relative). The bride and bridegroom face each other. The bridegroom takes the bride's right hand in his and repeats after the minister

I call upon these persons here present/ to witness that I, A.B.,/ do take thee, C.D., to be my lawful wedded wife,/

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to have and to hold from this day forward/ for better, for worse/ for richer, for poorer/ in sickness and in health/ to love and to cherish/ till death us do part/ according to God's holy law/ and this is my solemn vow.

The bride repeats after the minister

I call upon these persons here present/ to witness that I, C.D./ do take thee, A.B./ to be my lawful wedded husband./ to have and to hold from this day forward/ for better, for worse/ for richer, for poorer/ in sickness and in health/ to love and to cherish/ till death us do part/ according to God's holy law/ and this is my solemn vow.

They loose hands. The minister receives the rings and says

Heavenly Father, by your blessing, let these rings be to A.B. and C.D. a symbol of unending love and faithfulness, to remind them of the vow and covenant which they have made this day, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The bridegroom places the appropriate ring on the third finger of the bride's left hand and, holding the ring there, says

I give you this ring/ as a sign of our marriage./ With my body I honour you,/ all that I am I give to you/ and all that I have I share with you/ within the love of God,/ Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The bride places the other ring on the third finger of the bridegroom's left hand and, holding the ring there, says

I give you this ring/ as a sign of our marriage./ With my body I honour you,/ all that I am I give to you/ and all that I

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have I share with you/ within the love of God,/ Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

If preferred, the bride and bridegroom may repeat the words 'I give you this ring... ' together.

The minister addresses the congregation

In the presence of God, and before this congregation, A.B. and C.D. have given their consent and made their marriage vows to each other. They have declared their marriage by the joining of hands and by the giving and receiving of a ring. I therefore proclaim that they are husband and wife.

The minister joins their right hands together and says

Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.

The bride and bridegroom kneel. The minister lays his hands on them and commends them to God in prayer.

The use of the following is at the discretion of the minister

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face towards you and give you peace.
(Numbers 6:24-26)

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

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Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. (1 Corinthians 13:4-13)

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. (Ephesians 5:22,23,25,28)

The address may follow at this point.

A hymn/song may be sung.

The bridal party then proceeds for the signing of the register.

THE MARRIAGE SERVICE

RECONSECRATION OF MARRIAGE

This may be to celebrate a good marriage (perhaps at an anniversary) or renewal of marriage vows by a separated (but not divorced) couple now reconciled.

Note: This ceremony is not a re-marriage which requires notice being given to the superintendent registrar in the usual way.

The minister addresses the couple

A.B. and C.D., we are gathered together in the sight of God and in the presence of one another to ask God's blessing upon your marriage.

Marriage is more than a civil contract, a social convention or a religious ceremony. It was ordained by God from the beginning as the sacrament of human society for the mutual fellowship, help and comfort of husband and wife in prosperity and adversity.

Do you this day, declaring afresh your love for, and commitment to one another, seek that it may be enriched and further consecrated by God's blessing?

The couple reply

We do.

The minister asks the couple

Do you, with God's help, seek to build one another up encourage and comfort one another, and to build a home in which Christ is head and honoured as Lord?

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The couple reply

We do.

The minister then prays for God's blessing on the marriage

INFANT DEDICATION

BLESSING OF A CIVIL MARRIAGE

The couple may state their vows and commitment to each other as in the full marriage service. Alternatively, they may follow a form similar to the RECONSECRATION OF MARRIAGE section.

Such a ceremony does not invalidate or supersede a civil marriage and must not be recorded in the marriage register books. There are no legal preliminaries.

INFANT DEDICATION

This service indicates the intention of parents to bring up their child in the Christian faith and formally acknowledges that this will be possible only by the grace of God and with the help of the church. The dedication of children normally takes place in an evangelistic service.

BEFORE THE SERVICE

1. Ensure that the parents know the outline of the service. They will usually want to be reassured that the service is not going to be longer than the child can endure comfortably. Parents and child will normally sit towards the front of the congregation.
2. If one of the parents is not a Christian, the minister should verify that he or she is willing for the child to be brought up in the Christian faith.
3. Obtain the full name of the child to be dedicated.
4. The promise to be made by the congregation has serious implications for the work which it pledges to carry out. The minister should ascertain whether the congregation is able to provide adequate means to bring up the child in the Christian faith. If such means cannot be provided, the promise would be vain and must be avoided.
5. A visit by the minister before the service provides an opportunity to advise parents about the principles of

INFANT DEDICATION

Christian parenthood. Suitable literature and videos may also be made available.

THE SERVICE

The usual order is:

1. Hymn/song
2. Introductory words
3. Scripture readings
4. Address (or at 8 below)
5. Parental response
6. Congregational response
7. Prayer
8. Address
9. Conclusion or rest of service

1. Any hymn or song may be chosen, but sentimentality should be avoided.
2. *Addressing the congregation, the minister may say*

We welcome Mr. and Mrs. _____ and their *son/ daughter*,

In this service of dedication, we are to give thanks to God, the maker of all things, the giver of life, for the creation and birth of this child.

The parents and congregation are to make a solemn promise that we will endeavour to bring up this child in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, relying on God's help in our work together.

We are to pray that God's blessing may descend and rest upon this child, remembering how the Lord Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands on

them.

3. *Readings from some or all of the following texts are appropriate:*

Hear, O Israel: The LORD our GOD, The LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. (*Deuteronomy 6:4-7*)

From everlasting to everlasting the LORD's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children — with those who keep his covenant and remember to obey his precepts. (*Psalms 103:17,18*)

Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labour in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat — for he grants sleep to those he loves. Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him. (*Psalms 127:1-3*)

“And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me.

“See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.

“In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.” (*Matthew 18:5,10,14*)

INFANT DEDICATION

He took a little child and had him stand among them. Taking him in his arms, he said to them, “Whoever welcomes one of these little children in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me does not welcome me but the one who sent me.” (*Mark 9:36,37*)

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. (*Mark 10:13-16*)

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honour your father and mother”— which is the first commandment with a promise — “that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. (*Ephesians 6:1-4*)

4. The sermon may follow at this point. The preacher should be aware that the child may become restless if the sermon is too long.
5. *The minister addresses the parents*

In presenting this child to the Lord, do you promise, in dependence on divine grace, and in partnership with the church, to teach *him/her* the truths and duties of the Christian faith; and by prayer, teaching and example, to bring *him/her* up in the discipline and instruction of the

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Lord?

The parents should respond

We do.

If one of the parents is not a Christian, the following words should be used

In presenting this child to the Lord, do you promise that you will permit *him/her* to be taught the truths and duties of the Christian faith, and that so far as you are able, you will by your example bring *him/her* up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord?

The parents should respond

We do.

6. *The minister addresses the congregation*

Do you, as members of this church, acknowledge and accept the responsibility, together with the parents, of teaching and training this child, so that, being brought up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, *he/she* may be led in due time to trust Christ as Saviour, and, confessing him as Lord in baptism, be made a member of his Church? If so, will you signify your acceptance of this responsibility by standing.

7. *The minister takes the child in his arms and, using the child's name, prays for him/her.*

Afterwards the minister may say

INFANT DEDICATION

The LORD bless you (____) and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face towards you and give you peace.
(*Numbers 6:24-26*)

The minister shall return the child to its parents and ask the congregation to be seated.

8. The sermon may follow here. Alternatively, a brief break may take place when members of the congregation have the opportunity to greet the parents, their relatives and the child.

AFTER THE SERVICE

A visit to the parents and, if possible, the relatives and friends who attended the service could further strengthen links with the church.

THE FUNERAL

The funeral service must be conducted with sympathy and dignity. The circumstances of death affect the preparations for the funeral. If a Christian has died at the end of a fruitful life, there will be joy and praise mingled with natural sorrow. If death takes place after a long illness, everyone concerned is emotionally prepared to some extent. Death following accidents and the deaths of children are much harder to bear. If a child has died, alternative readings and words of committal are given at the end of this section.

The minister must seek the guidance of God in order to help the bereaved in the best possible way. Bereaved people often appear to be coping with their loss, but this is only because their emotions are masked by shock. If the death has been unexpected, shock may be replaced by anger and then long drawn-out sorrow. Ministers should be aware of this cycle of feelings and assure the bereaved that mourning is perfectly normal and biblical (Acts 8:2).

The service falls naturally into two parts: the part within the church building (or sometimes the home) and the part at the graveside or in the crematorium. If the entire service is held at the crematorium, the two parts should be amalgamated.

BEFORE THE SERVICE

1. The family will make many of the funeral arrangements and the minister's advice may not be necessary. He should know the time and date of the funeral and be aware of any special requests which the family has, for instance, there may be certain hymns which they have chosen. The family

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may want an evangelistic edge to the funeral address.

2. Tributes to the character and life of the deceased may be made by friends and relatives. The minister should find out who will be bringing these tributes and order the service accordingly.
3. The family may request that money for floral tributes be donated instead to a worthy cause. Advance notice of this should be given.
4. Provisions for family mourners should include reserved seats at the front of the church building, hymn books on seats and the possibility of the close family remaining seated throughout the service.
5. The tract 'Why a Christian Funeral'³ is especially suitable for an occasion of this nature and can be placed in the hymnal or order of service prior to the funeral.

FEES

It is helpful if the minister is acquainted with local funeral costs in order to advise the bereaved family. For example, a charge is incurred every time the body is moved to another location. Charges are also made for extra cars in the funeral cortege.

The fees for the minister and the church should be decided in advance by the church leadership. The family of the deceased should be informed if there are no fees.

THE SERVICE (IN THE CHURCH BUILDING)

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The usual order is:

6. Scripture readings
7. Prayer
8. Hymn or song
9. Tributes
10. Further scripture readings or hymn
11. Address
12. Prayer
13. Explanation of the arrangements for burial or cremation
14. Hymn or song

ORDERS OF SERVICE

1. When the coffin has been brought in, or while it is being brought in, the minister may read:

NIV

The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. (*Deuteronomy 33:27*)

Weeping may remain for a night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. (*Psalms 30:5*)

God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. (*Psalms 46:1*)

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me, will live even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." (*John 11:25,26*)

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If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. (*Romans 14:8,9*)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade — kept in heaven for you. (*1 Peter 1:3,4*)

AV

The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms. (*Deuteronomy 33:27*)

Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning. (*Psalms 30:5*)

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. (*Psalms 46:1*)

Jesus said, “I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” (*John 11:25,26*)

For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. (*Romans 14:8,9*)

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Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you. (*1 Peter 1:3,4*)

2. Set prayers are uncommon in Pentecostal gatherings. Whoever prays may appropriately ask for strength and comfort for the bereaved and thank God for the life which has passed.
3. The words of the hymns or songs should be in keeping with the occasion.
4. Tributes should be brief and personal. They should throw light on the character and achievements of the person who has died.
5. Readings may be taken from the following:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going.” Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No-one comes to the Father except through me.” (*John 14:1-6*)

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not

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give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” (*John 14:27*)

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (*Romans 8:18,28,35,37-39*)

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

But someone may ask, “How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?” How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just a seed, perhaps of wheat or of something else. But God gives it a body as he has determined, and to each kind of seed he gives its own body.

So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body

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that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” “Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (*1 Corinthians 15:20-23,35-38,42-44,50-57*)

6. The sermon will often follow in a similar vein to the tributes. If the person who died was a Christian, it is possible to dwell on the certainty of eternal life. However, a funeral is a reminder to the living that they too will die one day and that they should soberly consider the course of their lives.
7. A closing prayer can then be offered for comfort for the family and friends and thanksgiving for the earthly life that has just ended.
8. Directions to the cemetery or crematorium can be given

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along with any information about refreshments afterwards. The congregation will normally leave after the coffin has been carried out to the hearse.

9. A hymn or a song of victory may be sung if the deceased was a Christian.

COMMITTAL

1. Scripture readings
2. Words of committal
3. Prayer

1. Readings may be taken from the following:

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" "Yes, Lord," she told him, "I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who was to come into the world." (*John 11:25-27*)

I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus. On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet, which said: "Write on a scroll what you see and send it to the seven churches: to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea." I turned round to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone "like a son of man", dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a

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golden sash round his chest. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and out of his mouth came a sharp double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades." (*Revelation 1:9-18*)

Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labour, for their deeds will follow them." (*Revelation 14:13*)

2. Words of committal at the cemetery for a Christian

For as much as it has pleased Almighty God in his great mercy to take to himself the soul of our dear *brother/sister* here departed, we therefore commit *his/her* body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our earthly body that it might be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.

Alternative words of committal

Recognising the promotion of _____ by God to higher service in heaven, we commit *his/her* body to the

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sure word of God's promise of resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died, was buried, and rose again for us, and who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they may be like his glorious body. To him be glory for ever and ever.

Words of committal in the crematorium for a Christian

For as much as it has pleased Almighty God in his great mercy to receive unto himself the soul of our dear *brother/sister* here departed, we therefore commit *his/her* body to the elements, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died, was buried, and rose again for us, and who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they may be like his glorious body. To him be glory for ever and ever.

In the case of a person who was not a Christian

Now we commend _____ into God's care and commit *him/her* to be *cremated/buried*, trusting in God's love and compassion.

3. A prayer, thanking God for the life that has been lived.

IF A CHILD DIES

Readings may also be taken from:

David noticed that his servants were whispering among

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themselves and he realised that the child was dead. “Is the child dead?” he asked. “Yes,” they replied, “he is dead.” Then David got up from the ground. After he had washed, put on lotions and changed his clothes, he went into the house of the LORD and worshipped. Then he went to his own house, and at his request they served him food, and he ate. His servants asked him, “Why are you acting in this way? While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but now that the child is dead, you get up and eat!” He answered, “While the child was still alive, I fasted and wept. I thought, “Who knows? The Lord may be gracious to me and let the child live.” But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.” (2 *Samuel 12:19-23*)

As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him. (*Psalms 103:13*)

“See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven. [The Son of Man came to save what was lost.] “What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? And if he finds it, I tell you the truth, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that did not wander off. In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost.” (*Matthew 18:10-14*)

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the

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kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.” And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them. (*Mark 10:13-16*)

Words of committal

For as much as it has pleased Almighty God in his great mercy to receive unto himself the soul of this dear child here departed, we therefore commit *his/her* body to the ground, earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died, was buried, and rose again for us, and who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they may be like his glorious body. To him be glory for ever and ever.

Or at a cremation

We therefore commit *his/her* body to the elements, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life, through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died, was buried, and rose again for us, and who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they may be like his glorious body. To him be glory for ever and ever.

STILLBIRTH OR MISCARRIAGE

Attention should be given to the needs of parents who suffer loss of their child as a result of stillbirth (a mature baby who

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dies at birth) or a non-viable birth (miscarriage). These parents also need help for the loss of their loved one. A special funeral service can be arranged for such children in cooperation with the hospital where the baby died or with the director of the cemetery/crematorium. The service is private (generally with only the parents present) and short. There is normally no charge for this service. The Hospital Chaplain or Ward Sister should be able to advise on such matters.

BURIAL AT SEA

If someone has died on land, but has left a request for, or the family requests, a burial at sea, the local funeral director will be able to advise. Usually, the ashes of the deceased are scattered at sea in a private committal service.

AFTER THE SERVICE

Contact with the bereaved would be appreciated. Practical help from the congregation should be encouraged. Bear in mind that overcoming bereavement can take a long time. Every anniversary and birthday is a reminder of loss.

BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

Since one of the purposes of baptism is public expression of saving faith, it is common for candidates to give a spoken testimony of their salvation before immersion. Baptism normally takes place during a worship service, although there are no compelling theological reasons why it may not be administered within any other congregational service or during a special service. If it is part of a service at which the gospel is preached, the immersion of candidates serves as a natural focus for an evangelistic appeal. If baptism is part of a Communion service or a service when people are received into church membership, it acts as a reminder to existing members of the consequences of their faith and of the nature of the church.

BEFORE THE SERVICE

1. Ensure that the candidates have repented of known sin and are born again.
2. Make sure that the candidates understand the significance of baptism. Particular attention should be paid to ensuring that they understand how baptism expresses their identification with Christ in death, burial and resurrection (*Romans 6.1-7*). In practice, this guideline implies that baptismal candidates should be prepared by biblical teaching in advance of the service. It also means that candidates will be old enough to understand this instruction.
3. Some ministers link baptism closely with church

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membership. This has two implications: firstly, they will not baptise anyone who is a member of another congregation, except with the agreement of the leaders of that congregation, nor will they baptise anyone unsuitable for church membership for other reasons. Secondly, explanations about the duties and privileges of church membership need to be given together with teaching about baptism itself.

4. Since candidates are almost invariably new Christians, they may be anxious about speaking in public. If they are to give testimony of their salvation and relationship with Christ as part of the service, it is often helpful to insist that they write down beforehand what they want to say to avoid their being overcome by nervousness or speaking for an unduly long time.
5. Ensure that candidates understand the practicalities of the service. For example, they will need suitable dress and a change of clothing. Men and women will require different changing rooms.
6. A written record should be kept of the names of those baptised, and the date of the service. Baptismal candidates are glad to receive a card or certificate attesting to their baptism. The service may also be recorded on audio or video. Advance preparation is needed for this.
7. Candidates may send out invitation cards to encourage friends to attend the service.

THE SERVICE

The usual order is:

BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

1. Prayer followed or preceded by singing
2. Welcome and explanation
3. Scripture readings
4. Testimonies
5. Address
6. Baptisms
7. Prayer and singing

1. The reading of set prayers is uncommon in Pentecostal meetings. Nevertheless, it is appropriate to thank God for the salvation and obedience of the candidates and to pray for their future Christian development. Room is left for the operation of spiritual gifts, which are often appropriately manifested just after a candidate has been immersed.
2. Friends and relatives of the baptismal candidates should be warmly welcomed. It is important to give an explanation of the purpose of the service and its biblical basis. It may be necessary to explain the difference between the sprinkling of infants and believers' baptism. Reference can be made to the testimonies which will be given by the candidates later in the service.
3. Scripture readings can be taken from one of four categories in the New Testament:
 - i) the baptism of the Lord Jesus (implying that Christians are baptised following their Lord's example) —

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptised by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptised by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do

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this to fulfil all righteousness.” Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptised, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” (*Matthew 3:13-17*)

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” (*Mark 1:9-11*)

When all the people were being baptised, Jesus was baptised too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” (*Luke 3:21, 22*)

- ii) Christ's command to preach and baptise (implying that baptism is a matter of obedience)

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” (*Matthew 28:18-20*)

- iii) the baptism of early Christians (implying that baptism was important to the early Church)

BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Those who accepted his message were baptised, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (*Acts 2:38, 41, 42*)

Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they travelled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Why shouldn't I be baptised?” [Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” The eunuch answered, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”] And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptised him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. (*Acts 8:35-39*)

“All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.” While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, “Can anyone keep these people from being baptised with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” So he ordered that they be baptised in the name of

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Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days. (*Acts 10:43-48*)

iv) the doctrinal implications of baptism.

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin — because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God. In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. (*Romans 6:3-11*)

Having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. (*Colossians 2:12-15*)

BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

And this water symbolises baptism that now saves you also — not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience towards God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand — with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him. (*1 Peter 3:21, 22*)

A reading from each category may be desirable. This will depend on the time available for the baptismal service or the baptismal part of another service and on the frequency with which baptisms are administered in the presence of a particular congregation. If baptisms occur regularly, the congregation should be familiar with the scriptural basis for the practice, but if they are a rarity, the need to establish the scriptural basis is greater.

It should be noted that Matthew 28:18-20 establishes the verbal formula used just before the immersion of the candidate.

4. Testimonies, or interviews, should be brief, and a clear account of salvation is to be expected.
5. The sermon can be illustrated by using incidents mentioned in the testimonies. Naturally, the context of the service will shape the sermon: a Bible study and an evangelistic meeting have different purposes. The main purposes of baptism, however, can be introduced in the sermon.

Baptism is:

- i) an act of obedience to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ
- ii) a following of the example of our Lord Jesus Christ,

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who was himself publicly baptised in the River Jordan

- iii) a public confession of personal faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord
- iv) a pledge of allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Baptism is correctly thought of as 'an outward sign of an inward and spiritual change'. It follows repentance and faith and shows that the candidate is looking forward to a new beginning, a new start in a new life.

6. The baptism:

The minister enters the water first and is then able to help candidates into the water for their baptism. An assistant minister may also enter the water, particularly when there are large numbers of candidates or if a candidate is especially heavy.

An appropriate verse of Scripture may be read to the candidate before baptism.

The minister says

Do you make confession of repentance towards God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ?

The candidate responds

Yes or I do.

The minister says

Do you promise to serve the Lord depending on him for grace and power?

The candidate responds

BELIEVERS' BAPTISM

Yes *or* I do.

The minister says

On the confession of your repentance towards God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism requires one full immersion of each candidate.

After each baptism there may be a pause for the operation of spiritual gifts, or the congregation may sing an appropriate hymn or chorus.

The minister or someone assisting may say to the candidate

The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face towards you and give you peace. (*Numbers 6:24-26*)

7. Before praying, the minister may wish to make an appeal to the congregation. It is usual to close with singing.

AFTER THE SERVICE

A pastoral visit to friends and relatives who attended the service is desirable.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

A good time to receive people into membership is during the Communion service, immediately before the distribution of the emblems.

The minister will outline briefly the significance of membership of the local church and then, addressing the congregation, shall say:

Friends, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we are now to receive into membership

(here the minister introduces by name all those who are to be received and, if applicable, reads any letters of transfer from other congregations)

We commend these brothers and sisters to your love and fellowship and exhort you to encourage, help, and build them up in the Lord.

The minister may then read from the following

“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.” (*Mark 8:34, 35*)

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” (*John 13:34, 35*)

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” (*Acts 2:42*)

“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practise hospitality.” (*Romans 12:4-6, 9-13*)

“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.” (*Hebrews 10:23-25*)

The minister asks

Do you make profession of your faith in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord; and do you promise, in dependence on divine grace, to follow Christ and to serve him in the fellowship of his Church?

The one to be received answers

I do.

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After prayer, the minister extends the right hand of fellowship.

COMMUNION

COMMUNION

No Pentecostal minister would want to prescribe a set format for the Communion service for fear of ‘quenching the Spirit’. Throughout the United Kingdom and across the world, Pentecostal Communion services differ very greatly. This section of the manual describes some of the major practices.

THE BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

The institution of the Breaking of Bread (or Communion Service) is given in the four Gospels and 1 Corinthians 11. It is based on the Passover meal, which Jesus took with his disciples at the Last Supper. The Book of Acts records that the early Church celebrated Communion and did so with simplicity and joy. Everyone was encouraged to participate and the service, especially in Corinth after Paul's correctives, was intended to encourage unity in the church: they ate of one loaf and were members of one body. It is clear that partaking of the bread and wine was reserved solely for Christians, for only Christians have entered into the benefits of Christ's atoning death.

Early Christians certainly celebrated Communion in their homes, but since the emphasis on the unity of the whole church was embodied in the service, it is logical to suppose that the whole church, rather than parts of it, was present when the service was held. 1 Corinthians 14:23 speaks of the ‘whole church’ coming together.

In Matthew (26:26-29), Mark (14:22-25) and 1 Corinthians (11:23-26), reference is made first to the bread and then the

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wine, but in Luke's Gospel (22:17-20), the wine comes before and after the bread. However, in each instance Jesus is the centre of the occasion — he said, "Do this in remembrance of me" (1 Corinthians 11:24 & 25) — and the focus of attention is the death and resurrection of Jesus. For this reason, all or part of the passage of 1 Corinthians 11:17-34 is often read.

The importance of the Communion service can be measured by the fact that it rests on a command of Christ. Indeed it may be argued that a group of Christians who fail to remember Christ in this way do not constitute a local church.

CURRENT PRACTICE

In Pentecostal churches Communion services are usually held weekly or monthly. The most common practice is to hold the service on Sunday morning, but there is no reason why it should not be held on Sunday evening, either as a service in its own right or after a gospel or baptismal service. Since only believers are invited to participate in the bread and the wine, it is normal for the minister to make a statement to this effect if there is any uncertainty about the spiritual state of visitors. If it is apparent that there are people in the congregation who are not Christians, opportunity should be taken to explain the way of salvation.

Those who are truly born again should always take Communion. If, after obeying the scriptural injunction to examine oneself, a believer becomes conscious of a disqualifying factor, such as unforgiveness or a wrong attitude, it is his or her responsibility to set matters right with the person(s) concerned at the earliest opportunity and so be free to partake.

In Pentecostal congregations the bread and wine are usually distributed to those present by deacons or servers; it is not

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usual to ask people to come to the front to take the bread and wine directly from the hands of the minister. The bread may be taken from one loaf or several. In the same way, some congregations make use of one cup which is passed from person to person during the service; others use small individual cups. The use of individual cups has the advantage of speeding distribution in large gatherings, and some people prefer them for reasons of hygiene. The bread and wine are distributed separately.

Although we have referred to ‘wine’, it is true to say that in many Pentecostal congregations wine is not used on the grounds of teetotalism. Non-alcoholic wine may be purchased from special suppliers.

The preaching of the Word of God may come before or after the actual distribution of the emblems. It may be intended entirely to kindle devotion to Christ in the hearts of the hearers or it may be a doctrinal sermon on a general topic. Spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12 and 14) are to be anticipated in Communion services, although some ministers ask that in the period just before and during the distribution of the bread and wine these be held in abeyance so that people can concentrate on the Lord. Such restrictions on the timing of spiritual gifts cannot be sustained on biblical grounds, and it is quite fitting for those who are ill to be encouraged to seek the Lord for healing at the point when the communion takes place. Likewise, prophecies at this point in the service may turn the attention of the congregation more directly towards Christ. The most relevant ruling concerning spiritual gifts is that they should be in harmony with the congregation; they should not be sounding brass or tinkling cymbals which are struck at the wrong moment.

Music can play a part in the Communion service, although it should always be remembered that music is intended to express and facilitate worship. Not all members of the congregation

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will appreciate loud music, and many will prefer quieter and more reflective playing at the time when the death and resurrection of Jesus are the focus of attention.

INDUCTION OF MINISTERS

Induction is the formal beginning of ministry to a local church. It normally follows the appointment of a full-time pastor, but may also follow the appointment of a teacher, evangelist or youth pastor. In each case, the minister concerned will have a major role to play in church leadership.

The organisation of the induction service is usually the responsibility of senior ministers in the region, who will liaise with the leadership of the church where the induction is to take place. The service helps to introduce the new minister (and his wife) to other ministers in the region as well as to members of his new flock.

The essence of the induction service is the introduction and joining of the minister to the congregation and of the congregation to the minister and the prayer that this union will be fruitful.

BEFORE THE SERVICE

1. Induction services should not coincide with the times of normal church meetings. This is to enable other ministers to attend. It is important to ensure that everyone who needs to know is informed of the time, date and place of the service. Advance notice should also be given if food and drink are to be served at the end.
2. The following people are likely to participate in the service: the new minister, a representative of the congregation, a senior or supervising minister in the area and the preacher. All of them should know in advance what

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is expected of them.

GUIDELINES FOR THE SERVICE

1. Very often, the various ministers present will differ in their views of how the service should be conducted. Whoever leads the meeting should explain what he is doing and why.
2. In Pentecostal services the actual induction is usually marked by the laying on of hands and prayer. There may be spiritual gifts at this point and these should be judged in the normal way.
3. The 'charge' is read to the minister and the congregation, but care must be taken not to duplicate what will be said (or has been said) in the sermon. The minister reading the charge and the preacher should consult one another beforehand to prevent a double sermon.
4. There are no legally binding words which have to be said at an induction service and, to this extent, there is flexibility in the way that the meeting should be conducted.

THE SERVICE

The usual order is:

1. Worship and prayer
2. Scripture readings
3. Statements from:
 - a) a representative of the congregation
 - b) a minister in the region
 - c) the incoming minister

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- d) the previous church
4. Address
 5. Charge
 6. Laying on of hands
 7. Worship and prayer
1. Choose well-known music so that everyone can participate.
 2. Suitable scripture readings may be chosen from:

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him were seraphs, each with six wings: With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they were flying.

And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD
Almighty; the whole earth is full of his
glory.”

At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke. “Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the LORD Almighty.” Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.” Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!” (*Isaiah 6:1-8*)

The word of the LORD came to me, saying,
“Before I formed you in the womb I knew

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you, before you were born I set you apart;

I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.”

“Ah, Sovereign LORD,” I said, “I do not know how to speak; I am only a child.” But the LORD said to me, “Do not say, ‘I am only a child.’ You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you,” declares the LORD. Then the LORD reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, “Now, I have put my words in your mouth. See, today I appoint you over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and overthrow, to build and to plant.”

(Jeremiah 1:4-10)

Then the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go. When they saw him they worshipped him; but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” *(Matthew 28:16-20)*

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, with the people crowding round him and listening to the word of God, he saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch.”

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Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. So they signalled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will catch men." So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him. (*Luke 5:1-11*)

"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him." Peter asked, "Lord, are you telling this parable to us, or to everyone?" The Lord answered, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their

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food allowance at the proper time? It will be good for that servant whom the master finds doing so when he returns. I tell you the truth, he will put him in charge of all his possessions. But suppose the servant says to himself, "My master is taking a long time in coming," and he then begins to beat the menservants and maidservants and to eat and drink and get drunk. The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he is not aware of. He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the unbelievers. That servant who knows his master's will and does not get ready or does not do what his master wants will be beaten with many blows. But the one who does not know and does things deserving punishment will be beaten with few blows. From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked." (*Luke 12:35-48*)

But the righteousness that is by faith says: "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?' (that is, to bring Christ down) or 'Who will descend into the deep?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)." But what does it say? "The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame." For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile — the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, "Everyone who calls on the name of the

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Lord will be saved.” How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.
(Romans 10:6-17)

Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is plain to God, and I hope it is also plain to your conscience. We are not trying to commend ourselves to you again, but are giving you an opportunity to take pride in us, so that you can answer those who take pride in what is seen rather than in what is in the heart. If we are out of our mind, it is for the sake of God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. So from now on we regard no-one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as

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though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 *Corinthians 5:11-21*)

N.B. This passage may also be used as a charge to the congregation (section 5).

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit — just as you were called to one hope when you were called — one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says:

“When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.”

(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fulness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:1-13)

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To the elders among you, I appeal as a fellow-elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed: Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not fording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility towards one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you. Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings. And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen. (*1 Peter 5:1-11*)

Readers may be chosen from among the ministers present and from members of the local church.

3. Statements from the church, a local minister and the incoming minister should all be brief and are only of value if they express genuine feelings and intentions or if they relate how God's guidance led to the appointment of the

incoming minister.

4. The sermon can be used to provide teaching about the role and duties of the incoming minister and his new congregation. For this reason, it is helpful if the sermon is given by someone respected by both the congregation and the incoming minister. The new minister can be encouraged to care for the flock and to proclaim the gospel; and the congregation can be encouraged to care financially and in other ways for the minister and his family. It may be helpful to outline the role of the minister's wife at this point. She may wish to take an active part in leading meetings or she may have a more retiring disposition and be happier working with individuals. This decision is for her and her husband to make. The preacher can make it clear that the church should not try to force her into its preconceived mould.
5. The charge is the reading of some or all of those passages in the pastoral epistles where Paul charged Timothy:

Timothy, my son, I give you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies once made about you, so that by following them you may fight the good fight, holding on to faith and a good conscience. Some have rejected these and so have shipwrecked their faith. (*1 Timothy 1:18, 19*)

I charge you, in the sight of God and Christ Jesus and the elect angels, to keep these instructions without partiality, and to do nothing out of favouritism. Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. (*1 Timothy 5:21, 22*)

But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue

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righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses. In the sight of God, who gives life to everything, and of Christ Jesus, who while testifying before Pontius Pilate made the good confession, I charge you to keep this command without spot or blame until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which God will bring about in his own time — God, the blessed and only Ruler, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone is immortal and who lives in unapproachable light, whom no-one has seen or can see. To him be honour and might for ever. Amen. (*1 Timothy 6:11-16*)

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. (*2 Timothy 4:1-5*)

The reading is directed to the incoming minister, who may be asked to stand. A second charge to the congregation may also be read. Suitable passages are:

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Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honourable we treat with special honour. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honour to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But eagerly desire the greater gifts. (*1 Corinthians 12:14-31*)

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You, however, did not come to know Christ that way. Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbour, for we are all members of one body. “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (*Ephesians 4:20-32*)

6. The new minister (and his wife) should be prayed for with the laying on of hands. Ministers present may be called from the platform or the congregation to help. There may also be spiritual gifts at this time in the service.
7. The incoming minister should conclude the service.

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Opportunities for chaplaincy ministry vary from place to place within the United Kingdom. Those seeking to fulfil such a ministry need to recognise that chaplaincies are time consuming, and be aware of the following basic requirements:

- VISION:** Chaplaincy should be seen as a valid area of ministry and the call of God to fulfil it must be felt.
- GIFTING:** All chaplains should have a pastor's heart. Chaplaincy is more pastoral than evangelistic, although opportunities to witness often occur.
- SUPPORT:** A chaplain must have the backing of his local congregation. Their prayer support and acknowledgement of this use of his time is vital.

CIVIC CHAPLAINCY

Many opportunities exist for civic chaplaincy. Ministers need to be aware of these and prepared to take advantage of them. The chaplain is generally appointed at the Annual Meeting of the Council after the Mayor's election. An initial letter sent to the Mayor, and also, more particularly, to the Mayor elect (for the coming year), making a brief introduction and expressing the interest of the minister, along with an assurance of prayer for him or her in this important role, is invaluable in opening the way for a minister to become involved in chaplaincy. Any

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correspondence of this nature is beneficial as it raises awareness of the gospel and the work of the Christian community.

Although policy varies in different places, the chaplain has many duties. These may include attending the opening of Council meetings in order to offer prayer. The chaplain is expected to say grace at civic banquets. As spiritual adviser to the Mayor he is allocated a position close to the Mayor in civic processions; in some towns he and the Town Clerk walk at either side of the Mayor. At civic functions, each dignitary has a designated place and protocol must be observed at all times.

In addition, the chaplain will have some, if not full, responsibility for the civic church services, e.g. Mayor's Sunday, Remembrance Day. The venue and order of service for civic services is usually decided by the Mayor, but as he or she may have no preference or experience regarding hymns, readings etc., the chaplain will advise. Members of the Council, or friends of the Mayor, may be invited to read from the Scriptures. The chaplain may be able to see copies of the Order of Service from previous civic and Remembrance Day services, which can act as a guide. The Mayor's secretary will usually have these available, and also be able to advise in other ways, having served many previous dignitaries, and gained wide experience. Special attention should be paid to the timing of the services, and the allotted time must not be exceeded.

Normally, civic services are attended by local councillors, their families and friends, Members of Parliament, and perhaps the general public. Often, some press coverage is given. The chaplain is present, not merely to grace the occasion, but as a messenger of Christ. The opportunity must be taken to present the gospel with the utmost care and wisdom.

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During the year of office the Mayor has many engagements, some of which involve visits to schools, hospitals, community centres etc. Arrangements can be made, either by invitation of the Mayor, or at his own request, for the chaplain to attend such appointments. In addition, the chaplain's wife may be invited to attend the functions organised by the Mayoress e.g. the Mayoress' 'At Home'. In all of this, the chaplain has the opportunity to proclaim the gospel of Christ and, with wisdom and grace, to present its glorious truth to all whom the civic chaplaincy may bring across his path.

FISHERMEN

For information, contact:

The General Secretary
International Christian Maritime Association
Herald House
Lamb's Passage, Bunhill Row,
LONDON
EC1Y 8TQ

Tel. 0207 256 9216
Fax: 0207 256 9217
e-mail: icma.secgen@btconnect.com

Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen
Mather House
4400 Parkway
Solent Business Park
FAREHAM
Hampshire
PO15 7FJ

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Tel. 01489 566 910

e-mail: enquiries@rnmdsf.org.uk

HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY

All ministers visit hospitals from time to time as part of their normal ministry. Hospital chaplaincy work demands great skills and requires much more than a keenness to hand out tracts on the wards. Tact needs to go with contact. A good listener is more important than a good talker. This work is normally better undertaken by someone with a degree of commitment to a particular locality. Prospective chaplains will need to have the respect of their fellow ministers and to earn the respect of patients and staff.

In England and Wales, as far as the Free Churches are concerned, Health Care Chaplains are employed by the National Health Service and Primary Care Trusts and authorised for ministry by their respective denominations. Chaplains as members of NHS staff are subject to the same code of conduct, discipline and confidentiality as all NHS staff. They are employed to meet the spiritual and/or religious needs of people of all faiths, philosophies of life or none. A Free Church Chaplain is an integral member of the chaplaincy team (ecumenical and sometimes multifaith). He or she shares fully in ministry to all patients and staff and to the institution, while having a particular brief for Free Church patients.

All health care chaplaincy matters are delegated from the Free Church denominations to the Free Churches Group of Churches Together in England and are handled on their behalf by the Health Care Chaplaincy Steering Committee (HCCSC)

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and its secretary. A Free Church Chaplain represents all the churches within the Free Churches Group.

In each hospital of any size, it is the usual practice to have chaplains from each of the Anglican, Roman Catholic and Free Church denominations. It is expected that chaplains will work together, sharing general pastoral care. In many large hospitals there is a full-time chaplain who is usually, but not always, Anglican.

Impending or existing part-time vacancies are made to the HCCSC which informs the ministers of all Free Churches Group members (usually through the denominational organisation) of the vacant posts. Ministers wishing to apply do so through the HCCSC which forwards nominations to the relevant NHS or Primary Care Trust. The Trust then operates its selection procedure directly with the nominee and makes the appointment to the post.

Full-time vacancies open to Free Church ministers are normally advertised in the Methodist Recorder and the Baptist Times. For further advice on applying for full-time posts telephone 020 7529 8130.

The situation in Scotland is somewhat different at present, though it is under review. There, although the Health Authority funds the chaplaincy, the churches are the employing authority. It is anticipated that this will change in the near future, and the HA will become the employment authority as elsewhere in the UK. Any vacancies are usually advertised in the press and applications invited.

Most chaplaincy work is part-time, in the order of one to two sessions per week (a session being three and a half hours). The

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work is usually remunerated, but exact rates of pay are arranged locally. Within the sessional allowance, the chaplain should make time to meet chaplaincy colleagues, as well as give pastoral care to patients and staff. Some training is available for chaplains and they are expected to take advantage of such opportunities.

For information contact:

Free Churches Secretary for Health Care Chaplaincy
Churches Together in England
27 Tavistock Square
LONDON
WC1H 9HH

Tel: 020 7529 8141

Fax: 020 7529 8134

e-mail: Sabina.Williams@cte.org.uk

Web: www.churches-together.org.uk/FCG/index.htm

INDUSTRIAL

For information, contact:

The Administrative Officer
Christians at Work
148 Railway Terrace
RUGBY
Warwickshire
CV21 3HN

Tel: 01788 579 738

e-mail: office@christiansatwork.org.uk

Web: www.christiansatwork.org.uk

POLICE CHAPLAINCY

For information, contact:

National Association of Chaplains to the Police (NACP);
National Co-ordinator: Rev. Bill Hopley,
Tel 0121-6265071
Email: b.hopley@west-midlands.police.uk

PRISON CHAPLAINCY

THE FRAMEWORK

The number of people imprisoned in the United Kingdom is equivalent to the population of a small town. Some have been convicted for the most serious offences, others are simply on remand awaiting trial. In keeping with the different offences which bring people to prison, inmates are placed into one of four security categories:

- Category A for prisoners whose escape would be highly dangerous to the public, police or national security if they were to escape.
- Category B for prisoners who do not need the highest conditions of security but for whom escape must be made very difficult.
- Category C for prisoners who cannot be trusted in open conditions but who do not have the ability or resources to make a determined escape attempt.
- Category D for those who can be reasonably trusted not to try to escape but to serve their sentence in open conditions.

CHAPLAINS

The rights and duties of chaplains have a long history within the prison system. Each prison has a chaplain from the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church and the Methodist Church appointed to it, although not all are full time. Other denominations have the right to appoint visiting ministers to meet the religious needs of those registered in their denomination. Many Pentecostal ministers begin prison ministry by visiting a prison in their area occasionally. If a minister feels a calling to this work, he or she will wish to contact and gain the confidence of the Prison Chaplain. All those who work as chaplains must receive security clearance from the Home Office and come under its authority and regulations.

Since the situation in prisons is surrounded by difficulties, both the Chaplain and the Governor of the prison do not want religious visitors causing difficulties, either by becoming a security risk or by inciting prisoners to unreal expectations. What is required is a genuine pastoral concern for prisoners, coupled with a good deal of common sense and tact to allow pitfalls and dangers to be seen in advance. Ministers must learn to distinguish between prisoners with real spiritual convictions and those who are play-acting in the hope of sympathy or gain. Ministers may not make contact with or pass messages from a prisoner to someone outside the prison. All letters and communications from within the prison to the outside world are censored. Any information given by prisoners to ministers is expected to be written down and filed in the Chaplain's office. Prisoners soon recognise whether a minister is simply putting in an obligatory appearance at a prison function or whether he really has time for the prisoners and genuinely wants to talk about their problems. Ministers should not express shock at whatever confessions may be made to them.

VISITING MINISTERS

Visiting ministers' duties are directed towards inmates registered in their own denomination. They will be responsible for visiting such prisoners, making sick visits if necessary, and possibly conducting funerals or breaking the news of death if they are available at the time of need. They are paid for the hours they give to prison work and may bring together registered members of Pentecostal churches for worship.

CHAPLAINCY TEAMS

Some Pentecostal ministers move from the position of visiting minister, visiting only those registered as members of a Pentecostal church, to being a member of the ecumenical chaplaincy team. This occurs where there is a sufficient degree of unanimity of purpose between such ministers and the other team members. It means that a Pentecostal minister may then participate in the worship from time to time and help in other chaplaincy duties as may be arranged, take services and share in the visiting. Such teamwork presupposes a shared acceptance of one another's doctrinal positions and respect for differences; there must be acceptance of one another's baptism and an undertaking not to proselytise from one denomination to another. The regular functioning of a Pentecostal minister within such an ecumenical team depends on good personal relationships and the credibility of the Pentecostal church in the area.

Chaplains who become members of teams in this way may be issued with keys and/or an identity card. There may be a certain amount of paperwork connected with the ministry, and those sharing membership of the chaplaincy team may be asked to give advice to Parole Boards or Local Review Committees.

CHAPLAINCIES

USEFUL ADDRESSES

Prison Service Chaplaincy Headquarters
Horseferry House
Dean Ryle Street
LONDON SW1P 2AW

Tel: 0207 217 8960

Prison Fellowship England and Wales
PO Box 945
MALDON
Essex CM9 4EW

Tel: 01621 843232

Fax: 01621 843303

e-mail: Enquiries@PrisonFellowship.org.uk

Web: www.prisonfellowship.org.uk

Probation Service Christian Fellowship
The Secretary,
PSCF P.O. Box 783
CROYDON,
CR9 1BT

Tel: 0870 027 3221

Web: www.pscf.org.uk

Langley House Trust
P.O. Box 181
WITNEY

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Oxfordshire
OX28 6WD

Tel: 01993 774075
Fax: 10993 772425
e-mail: info@langleyhoustrust.org
Web: www.langleyhoustrust.org

I.C.I. Bible Study
London Road
NANTWICH
Cheshire
CW5 6LW

New Assembly of Churches
Rev. C. Jones
15 Oldbridge Road
LONDON
SW12 8PL

Tel: 0208 673 0595
Fax: 0208 675 8768

Outreach Unlimited
Ken and Amanda Wiles
21 Baker Street
Burntwood
Staffordshire
WS7 8QD

Telephone: 01543 672373

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SCHOOLS CHAPLAINCY

INTRODUCTION

A local church will naturally wish to have an impact on the schools in the vicinity. There are very many ways into a school: indirectly, through children, parents, teachers, governors, advisers, or directly, as representatives of particular congregations. A great deal of good can be done, provided that ministers and members are wise in their approach. If, however, they misunderstand the nature of the educational process or the well-founded concerns of headteachers to protect children from religious mavericks, then they can do harm.

Christians who are unaware of the nature of education fail to notice that there is a difference between teaching and evangelism. No parent or teacher wants to see children put under emotional pressure to 'decide for Christ' in the classroom or in school assembly. Children are used to being told what to do by adults and they can be pressurised into making decisions that they do not understand or mean. Furthermore, if evangelical Christians pressurise children into 'making decisions', it will not be long before other groups begin to adopt the same tactics. For this reason, Christians involved in trying to influence education in general and children in particular need to understand what they are doing. An approach based on a long term relationship with a school is more likely to be genuinely fruitful than one which attempts to produce instant results.

THROUGH CHILDREN

Christian children in school are the best ambassadors for

Christ. They can speak to their friends in a natural way about what it means to believe in Jesus. Ministers should encourage them to share their faith and answer any questions raised about how their faith works in practice. For example, should Christian children become involved in fights? What happens if they are victimised? Should children argue with teachers if they disagree with what is being taught?

The minister has a responsibility either through instructing parents or through youth groups to help children to come to terms with their faith. Situations will vary from place to place, but the minister must communicate to children that there is nothing to be ashamed of in being a Christian and that any criticisms made against the Bible can be answered. There are definite steps which the minister can take if Christian children are finding school life hostile.

THROUGH PARENTS

There is increasing recognition of the importance of parents in education. Schools want the support of parents, both financially and in other ways. As a legal recognition of this, there are seats on the governing body reserved for parents. This means that parents who are unhappy about what is going on in schools can speak or write to the parent-governors and ask them to bring matters to the attention of governors' meetings.

The Parent Teacher Association (or Parent Teacher and Friends Association) can become a forum for expressing concerns or initiating charitable action.

Schools often welcome parents on a voluntary basis. School trips, help in swimming arrangements, concerts, carol services, fund raising, library work, etc. are all avenues to parental involvement. Simply by getting to know staff and being supportive of the school, parents can exercise a positive

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influence and, moreover, if they have a complaint, they are in a position to be taken seriously.

Parents should note that they have a legal right to withdraw their children from school assemblies or lessons giving religious education. All that parents need do is to inform the school in writing of their decision. The school is obliged to make alternative arrangements. This right should not be used too readily because Christian children who are constantly withdrawn from R.E. lessons may begin to resent being separated from their friends. Only the parent can decide whether withdrawal is going to be truly beneficial. In primary schools complications may arise because timetable subjects tend to be integrated and children may do R.E. as part of an overall project on a broad topic.

THROUGH TEACHERS

Many Christians have a vocation to school teaching. The Association of Christian Teachers (94a London Road, ST ALBANS, Hertfordshire AL1 1NX Tel: 01727 840298 e-mail:act@christian-teachers.org.uk Web: www.christian-teachers.org.uk) is a dedicated and well-organised group of evangelical teachers who are very willing to provide advice and help to teachers and to churches wishing to support teachers. One Sunday each year can be designated 'Education Sunday' and the Association will suggest ways to bring the needs of local schools before the local churches.

Ministers with teachers in their congregations are in a better position than most to gain invitations into schools. They can be invited to give morning assemblies or to talk about their faith in R.E. or Sociology lessons.

Christian teachers are uniquely placed to supervise Christian Unions in schools. After obtaining the consent of the headteacher, C.U.s can be run on the same basis as other clubs

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and societies within the school. Scripture Union England and Wales (207-209 Queensway, Bletchley, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire MK2 2EB Tel: 01908 856000 Fax: 01908 856111 e-mail: info@scriptureunion.org.uk Web: www.scriptureunion.org.uk. Scottish, Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland details available on the website) print suitable materials and produce visual aids.

Schools Outreach (12-22 Albert Street, BIRMINGHAM. B4 7UD) endeavours to place skilled workers in schools to work alongside teachers as counsellors or assistants. Further information may be obtained from the above address.

Teachers frequently have little desire to be involved in Sunday School or Youth Work outside school; they see a lot of young people during the week. Ministers should be sensitive to this fact, although they may wish to use the talents and expertise of teachers to give training to other members of the congregation who teach or look after children in the church's weekly schedule.

THROUGH GOVERNORS

There are both parent-governors and teacher-governors on the governing bodies of larger schools. Christians can therefore be elected to these positions and have an important voice in the running of schools.

Governors have a large amount of paperwork to read and make decisions upon and only a small part of the committee's time will be spent on obviously religious matters. Nevertheless, the appointment of staff, the use of different methods of disciplining children, the allocation of resources and balance given to subjects in the curriculum are all of interest to the alert Christian governor.

THROUGH ADVISERS

Local Education Authorities oversee what is done in schools by means of teams of advisers/inspectors, who provide in-service training and ensure that teaching meets the required standards. Certainly, parents or ministers who are unhappy about what is happening in schools can make their worries known to advisers/inspectors. This approach should only be made after direct approaches to teachers and governors have failed.

DIRECTLY

Ministers can go into schools by invitation to speak to groups of children. It is important to realise that there is a distinction between voluntary groups (e.g., Christian Unions) and non-voluntary groups (e.g., ordinary classes). There are less likely to be objections to a minister speaking to a voluntary group because the children have a choice about attending. Non-voluntary groups are different because the children are required to be there by law. Here the minister must talk more in terms of 'this is what my faith means to me' or 'this is what many Christians believe' rather than 'you must believe this if you are going to go to heaven'.

Young people's teams or Youth Ministers can have a regular input in schools. They can speak in the idiom of youth and present the gospel in a lively and interesting way, often by personal testimony or simply by telling Bible stories. Anyone wanting to arrange visits by young people's teams or special speakers should do so on the basis of personal recommendation. A badly-rehearsed team or a boring speaker will result in the loss of credibility of the person making the booking.

PRAAYER AND MONEY

Churches should pray regularly for their local schools and be prepared to fund the purchase of Christian books for the school library or to give towards worthwhile school projects. The local Gideons will wish to present pocket New Testaments to children. Churches should support the Gideons either financially or by encouraging suitable members to join the local chapter.

SPORT

Opportunities exist in many areas. At professional level, many football, cricket and rugby clubs have appointed honorary chaplains. The local sports centre and local sports clubs (e.g., squash, golf, tennis, rugby) may also offer possibilities for chaplaincy work. The club does not have to belong to a significant national league structure.

Sports chaplaincy is being recognised more widely and organisers are becoming open to the availability of chaplains. Major national and international sports gatherings now often have a sports chaplaincy team appointed for the period of the event.

EXAMPLES OF CHAPLAINCY WORK WITHIN A FOOTBALL CLUB

It is helpful for the chaplain to be present at training sessions and matches in order to make contacts and build friendships. Entertaining at home is another means of establishing contact as dinners are less threatening to players when they can come in pairs or groups. A club carol service at Christmas also offers opportunities.

When injury occurs, players may be frustrated or uncertain about their future and need help, support and encouragement.

CHAPLAINCIES

Most players in hospital value the 'Padre' visiting them before an operation.

Family changes, such as a new baby, a bereavement, marriage breakdown, terminal illness, all create pastoral opportunities. Young players away from home face new pressures and some may be homesick.

Providing Christian support for those already committed to Christ, through Bible study groups, etc. is also an important part of the chaplain's work.

FURTHER HELP

Christians in Sport
Frampton House
Victoria Road
Bicester
Oxon
OX26 6PB

Telephone: 01869 255630

Web site: www.christiansinsport.org.uk

SCORE

National Director: John K. Boyers
P.O. Box 123,
SALE,
Manchester
M33 4ZA

Tel/Fax:0161-969-1762

NOTES

1. *Why a Christian Funeral?*, John Glass.
Obtainable from:

Elim Administrative Offices
P.O. Box 38
CHELTENHAM
Gloucestershire
GL50 3HN