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***The Order of Service for***

## *The Licensing by the Bishop of*

## *of the Revd*

***as Priest in Charge of***

***[Date and time]***

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# This service of licensing is the time when the priest takes up their position as new priest in charge for the parish(es). In the service the new priest declares their faith in Christ, as uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and makes promises of allegiance to the Queen and obedience to the Bishop. It is also the time when, represented by visiting the Holy Table, the Lectern and the Font, both new priest and the people promise to uphold the ministry of word and sacrament and to fulfil the diocesan vision to make disciples, be witnesses and to grow leaders. It is a time of welcome, thanksgiving and celebration for everyone as a new ministry begins and a new chapter in the life of the parish opens up.

# The Service of Licensing a Priest to a Parish(es)

*¶ The Gathering*

*The Area Dean announces the Processional hymn and the Procession enters the Church in the following order:*

*The Choir*

*The Parochial Church Council (s)*

*The Readers and Licensed Lay Workers*

*The Visiting Clergy, Ministers and Ecumenical Representatives*

*The Clergy and Readers of the Parish(es)*

*The Patron with the Priest in Charge designate*

*The Area Dean*

*The Archdeacon*

*The Churchwardens*

*The Bishop’s Chaplain (if present)*

*The Bishop*

*The Priest in Charge designate sits in the front pew*

***The Greeting***

*Bishop* In the name of the Father,   
and of the Son,   
and of the Holy Spirit.

*All* **Amen.**

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father

and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

*All*  **and also with you.**

*The Bishop introduces the service in these or other words*

*Bishop* Brothers and sisters in Christ, we are here as the family of God  
in our Father’s presence to offer Him our worship and praise,  
to hear and receive His holy word, and to pray for His blessing   
on all who work in his name.

Today we thank God for the ministry and mission of his Church   
over the years in *this* *parish / these parishes* and for those who have   
shared in it during the time of vacancy.   
And now we welcome *N* and as we commission *him/her* to this new ministry   
so we rededicate ourselves to the call of God,   
to make disciples, to be witnesses and to grow leaders,  
that we may fulfil our calling to be a healthy church that transforms its community.  
Let us pray that, inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit,   
God will renew us in ministry and mission.

*Bishop* Heavenly Father, bless *this parish* and those who

minister here, that with *N* they may fulfil your   
loving purposes for those who live and work in this place. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

*All* **Amen**

***The Presentation***

*The Bishop sits. The Patron, or a representative, the Priest in Charge designate and the Churchwardens stand before the bishop*

*Patron* Bishop *N*, I present *N* to be licensed as Priest in Chargeto the..........

*Bishop* Thank you for your presentation, which I accept.

*If the benefice is in the Bishop’s own gift, he says*

Brothers and sisters in Christ, I declare to you that I   
have appointed *N* be Priest in Charge of this benefice and that I intend to licence *him/her.*

*Words of commendation may be offered from the priest’s previous church*

*The Incumbent designate turns to face the congregation*

*Bishop* It is my pleasure to introduce *N* to you who is to be your new

Priest in Charge*.*

People of *this parish/these parishes* and all who share in Christ’s ministry here, will you support each other in that ministry and now welcome *N* among you?

*People* **In Christ’s name we will.**

*The Priest in Charge designate returns to the front pew*

*¶ The Liturgy of the Word*

***Collect***

*Bishop* Almighty and everlasting God,   
by whose spirit the whole body of the Church is governed and sanctified:   
hear our prayer for all Your servants,  
especially for Your Church in this place;  
that each of us in our vocation and ministry   
may serve You in holiness and truth,   
to the glory of Your name and the good of Your Church   
and give to Your servant *N,* now to be Instituted, the needful gifts of grace, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

*All* **Amen.**

*There may be either one or two readings from Scripture read by members of the congregation. At the end the reader will say*

This is the word of the Lord.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**

*A hymn/psalm/anthem or song may be sung. The congregation remains standing for the Gospel (or sits for a reading from the Epistles) read by the Area Dean*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to *N.*

*All* **Glory to you, O Lord.**

*at the end* This is the Gospel of the Lord.

*All* **Praise to you, O Christ.**

*Sit*

***Sermon***

*¶ The Licensing*

***Declaration and Oaths***

*The Declaration of Assent*

*Bishop* The Church of England is part of the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church worshipping the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It professes the faith uniquely revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the Catholic creeds, which faith the Church is called upon to proclaim afresh in each generation. Led by the Holy Spirit, it has born witness to Christian truth in its historic formularies, the Thirty Nine Articles of Religion, the Book of Common Prayer and the Ordering of Bishops, Priests and Deacons. In the declaration you are about to make, will you affirm your loyalty to this inheritance of faith as your inspiration and guidance under God in bringing the grace and truth of Christ to this generation and making him known to those in your care?

*The Priest in Charge designate makes the following declaration:*

I, *N,* do so affirm, and accordingly declare my belief in the faith which is revealed in the Holy Scriptures and set forth in the Catholic creeds and to which the historic formularies of the Church of England bear witness; and in public prayer and administration of the sacraments, I will only use the forms of service which are authorised or allowed by Canon.

*All stand*

*The Priest in Charge designate takes the Oaths, holding the Bible in his/her right hand and facing the congregation*

*The Oath of Allegiance*

I, *N*, do swear that I will be faithful and bear true allegiance to her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the Second, her heirs and Successors, according to Law; so help me God.

*The Oath of Canonical Obedience, facing the Bishop*

I, *N*, do swear by almighty God that I will pay true and canonical obedience to the Lord Bishop of Blackburn and his Successors in all things lawful and honest; so help me God.

*The Bishop then replies*

Thank you for this declaration of loyalty. On behalf of our diocese I, with all God’s people here, undertake to support and uphold you in your new ministry.

***The Promises of Priest and People***

*Bishop* Beloved in Christ, before we proceed to the Licensing,   
let priest and people be reminded of their duties within the Church of God and affirm their readiness to share in fulfilling our vision as healthy churches transforming communities.

*The Area Dean leads the Priest in Charge designate, Churchwardens, Archdeacon and the Bishop to the sanctuary. Bread and wine may be placed on the Holy Table.  
  
Archdeacon* It is the duty of the parish priest to be,

like Christ the true High Priest,  
a faithful minister in the Church of God;   
to celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion   
 and to nourish the people of God.

*Bishop N*, relying on the power of the Spirit,   
will you act as a faithful steward of the mysteries   
of God, lead your people in worship and prayer, and raise up leaders,   
that together you may proclaim God’s saving love to his world?

*Priest* By God’s grace, I will.

*Bishop* People of *this* *parish* will you be faithful in public

worship and private prayer?   
Will you delight in obeying Jesus’ command to remember His death until He comes again and to receive the sacrament of Holy Communion regularly as part of your growth in discipleship?

*People* **By God’s grace, we will.**

*Parishioner N,* be among us to break the bread and bless the cup,

so that we may obey the command of Christ to do this in remembrance of Him.

*The procession moves to the lectern and a Bible may be placed upon it.*

*Archdeacon* It is the duty of the parish priest to be, like Christ, a teacher;

to study and reflect upon the truth of Holy Scripture;   
through preaching and teaching to proclaim the truths of the Gospel;  
and to help all people grow as disciples of Christ.

*Bishop N*, relying on the power of the Spirit,  
will you be faithful in studying, teaching and proclaiming the truth of Holy Scripture, ordering your life to reflect to others the Gospel of Christ?

*Priest* By God’s grace, I will.  
  
*Bishop* People of *this parish*, will you be faithful in Bible Study

and seek to grow as disciples of Christ?

*People* **By God’s grace we will.**

*Parishioner* *N,* be among us as one who helps us joyfully hear and obey

and proclaim the Word of God.

*The procession moves to the font and water may be poured into it. All turn to face the font.*

*Archdeacon* It is the duty of the parish priest to be like Christ,  
a herald of God’s Kingdom and a servant of the needy,

to administer the sacrament of Baptism with due care and preparation,   
to nurture within the faith those who have been baptised and to prepare members of the Church for confirmation,

*Bishop* *N,* relying on the power of the Spirit,  
will you give yourself gladly and willingly  
to serving the spiritual and material needs of this community,   
to baptise them in the faith and equip them to be witnesses in the world?

*Priest* By God’s grace, I will.

*Bishop* People of *this parish* will you work to transform this community  
with the love of Christ, giving willingly of your time, money and energy  
to make God’s Kingdom visible in this place?

*People* **By God’s grace, we will.**

*Parishioner N* be among us as one who helps us to obey

Christ’s command to be his witnesses in word and deed.

*All stand, a hymn may be sung as the procession returns to the Bishop’s chair.*

*Bishop* Priest and people, together we have made solemn promises to serve God and His world. Let us pray for the guiding and empowering of God’s Spirit that we may fulfil the vision He has entrusted to us:

*All say together the Vision Prayer*

**Heavenly Father,**

**we embrace Your call for us to make disciples,**

**to be witnesses, to grow leaders**

**and inspire children and young people.**

**Give us eyes to see Your vision,**

**ears to hear the prompting of Your Spirit**

**and courage to follow in the footsteps of Your Son,   
our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

(If the Priest in Charge designate is part of a Ministry Team the other ministers stand with him/her before the Bishop and the following is said:

*Bishop* In a team, clergy and lay workers collaborate to serve their congregations.

*N,* will you work with your colleagues in the service of Christ and support them in their ministry?

*Priest* By God’s grace, I will.

*Bishop N & N*, will you take care with *N* to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace and together build up the common life?

*Team* By God’s grace, we will.

*(The other ministers return to their places.*)

***The Licensing***

*All kneel, the Priest in Charge designate kneeling before the Bishop who invites the people to pray in silence.*

*Bishop* *N,*do not forget the trust of those who have chosen

you. In your work and ministry, and with your colleagues, care alike for young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor.

By your words and in your life preach the gospel,.  
and show to people the glory and beauty of Jesus.  
Give time for yourself, your family and friends.  
Love and serve Christ’s people. Nourish them  
by word and sacrament and strengthen them to glorify  
God in this life and in the life to come.

*The Bishop sits and reads the Licence and gives it to the priest with the words.*

Receive your cure and mine;

in the name of the Father,  
 and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

*The Bishop stands and, taking his staff, blesses the priest:*

*N*, the Lord give you courage, wisdom, strength   
and love to do his will:

and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son  
and Holy Spirit, rest upon you and remain with you always. Amen.

***The Installation***

*The Archdeacon takes the Priest in Charge by the hand and places him/her in his/her seat. The priest sits down and the Archdeacon says to him/her*

*N,* I place you in (one of) the accustomed seat (s) of the priest of *this parish (these parishes),* and may God’s blessing rest upon your ministry.

*Priest* Amen.

*¶*

*The Prayers*

*All kneel or sit as the Priest in Charge leads the people in prayer, using these or other words:*

*Priest* Let us pray for the growth of God’s Kingdom, saying,

Father, Your Kingdom come:

*All* **Your will be done.**

*Priest* In Jesus you came to bring good news to all people,   
send us out to build Your Kingdom.   
As living stones anoint us with Your Spirit,   
and strengthen us to work in His name.   
Father, Your Kingdom come:

*All* **Your will be done.**

*Priest* Send us to bring justice to the poor and freedom to the oppressed. Help us to exercise our influence for good in the world, our nation and our neighbourhood.

Father, Your Kingdom come:

*All* **Your will be done.**

*Priest* Send us to serve our local community,   
bringing Your love and truth to young and old,   
in our homes, schools and colleges,   
and places of work and leisure, and sharing the gospel of salvation of Your Son.

Father, Your Kingdom come:

*All* **Your will be done.**

*Priest* Send us to share with the world the good news   
of Your healing love in all the brokenness of life,   
and help us to be faithful witnesses to the risen glory of Your Son.

Father, Your Kingdom come:

*All* **Your will be done.**

*Priest* Send us to the sick and those who mourn,   
that we may bring comfort to all in sorrow,   
and light to those who live in darkness.

Father, Your Kingdom come:

*All* **Your will be done.**

*Priest* Send us out in the power of Your Spirit  
 to live and work to Your praise and glory.  
 Father, Your Kingdom come:

*All* **Your will be done.**

*The intercessions conclude with the Lord’s Prayer*

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| --- | --- |
| As our Saviour taught us, so we pray  *All*  **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those  who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power,  and the glory are yours now and for ever.  Amen.** | Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us    *All*  **Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those  who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever.  Amen.** |

*Sit*

***The Welcome***

*The new Priest in Charge may be welcomed by the Churchwardens, representatives of the parish(es), of the deanery, of other churches and the community.*

*The Priest in Charge then invites the people to join with him/her when he/she first preaches the Word of God and celebrates the Holy Communion in this/another church, gives any notices and he/she then announces the hymn, during which a collection is taken for the Bishop’s Ordination Fund****.***

*¶ The Dismissal*

***The Blessing***

*The Bishop gives the blessing after which the procession leaves Church in the following order.*

*The Choir*

*The Parochial Church Council (s)*

*The Readers and Licensed Lay Workers*

*The Visiting Clergy and Ministers*

*The Clergy and Readers of the Parish(es)*

*The Area Dean*

*The Bishop’s Chaplain (if present)*

*The Archdeacon*

*The Churchwardens*

*The Bishop with the new Priest in Charge*

*Footnote: word “priest” may be substituted by “minister” throughout (but “Priest in Charge” cannot change).*

***Note for including the Holy Eucharist in the service****:*

*After the prayers by the new Priest in Charge, omit the Lord’s Prayer and move to the Welcome by the different representatives. This is followed by the Peace (announced by the Bishop and the invitation given by the new Priest in Charge). At the end of the Peace, the new Priest in Charge gives the notices and announces the offertory hymn.*

*The service then follows the Common Worship Eucharist, according to the usual practice of the parish, including relevant seasonal material. The Bishop will preside.*

*The service concludes with the Dismissal.*