

## Chapter 10

### DEDICATION SERVICES

#### A. Dedication of a Church Building

##### 5950. Order of Dedication of a Church Building.

#### Call to Worship

*(The pastor or other appointed minister shall give the call to worship:)*

“Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name” (Ps. 100:2-4, NIV).

#### Invocation

*(Then the pastor or other appointed minister may pray an extemporaneous invocation or use the following:)*

O God, eternal and ever blessed, who delights in the assembling of your people in the sanctuary; receive us graciously as we come into your house, and grant that peace and prosperity may be found within its walls, that the glory of God may be the light thereof, and that we may be satisfied with the goodness of your house; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### Hymns

*(Then the congregation shall join in singing a hymn, such as one of the following: “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name,” “O Worship the King,” “The Church’s One Foundation,” “I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord.”)*

#### Scripture Readings

*(Then the pastor or other appointed minister shall read a scripture lesson, such as one of the following: 2 Chron. 6:1-2, 18-21, 40-42; 7:1-4; Ps. 24; Ps. 84; Heb. 10:19-25.)*

### **Sermon**

*(The General Superintendent, the district superintendent or other appointed minister may be asked to deliver a message on the nature and task of the church.)*

### **Offering**

*(It is much to be desired that all money required for the erection and completion of a house in which to worship God shall be fully provided before the day of dedication; but where this is not done, appeals may be made either just before or following the sermon. No building shall be dedicated to God until approved as financially secure and properly deeded as specified in The Discipline.)*

### **Presentation of Building for Dedication**

*(Then the district superintendent or representative shall stand at the pulpit facing the trustees of the church. The chair of the trustees shall address the district superintendent, saying:)*

On behalf of the trustees, the members and this congregation, I present you this building to be dedicated to God as a place of worship and of service in His kingdom.

### **Acceptance of Building for Dedication**

*(Then the district superintendent shall respond, saying:)*

Dear friends, for countless centuries people have erected buildings for the public worship of God, and have separated these buildings from all unhallowed uses in order to increase their reverence for God and for those places in which they commune with Him. We rejoice that God has put it into the hearts of His people to build this house in this place to the glory of His name. I now accept this building, to be known as the \_\_\_\_\_ Wesleyan Church, to dedicate it and to set it apart for the worship of Almighty God and the service of all people. Let us therefore, as we are assembled, solemnly dedicate this place to its proper and sacred uses.

### **Litany of Dedication**

*(Then the district superintendent shall cause the congregation to stand and to join in the responsive litany of dedication:)*

**Leader:** To the glory of God the Father, who has called us by His grace; to the honor of His Son, who loved us and gave Himself for us; to the praise of the Holy Spirit, who illumines and sanctifies us;

**Congregation:** We dedicate this house.

**Leader:** For the worship of God in prayer and praise;

**Congregation:** For the preaching of the everlasting gospel;

**Leader:** For the celebration of the holy sacraments;

**All:** We dedicate this house.

**Leader:** For the comfort of all who mourn;

**Congregation:** For strength to those who are tempted;

**Leader:** For light to those who seek the way;

**All:** We dedicate this house.

**Leader:** For the hallowing of family life;

**Congregation:** For teaching and guiding the young;

**Leader:** For the perfecting of the saints;

**All:** We dedicate this house.

**Leader:** For the conversion of sinners;

**Congregation:** For the sanctification of believers;

**Leader:** For the promotion of righteousness; for the extension of the kingdom of God;

**All:** We dedicate this house.

**Leader:** In the unity of the faith; in the bond of Christian brotherhood; in charity and goodwill to all;

**Congregation:** We dedicate this house.

**Leader:** In gratitude for the labors of all who love and serve this church; in loving remembrance of those who have finished their course; in the hope of a blessed immortality through Jesus Christ our Lord;

**Congregation:** We dedicate this house.

**All in Unison:** We now, the people of this church and congregation, surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, grateful for our heritage, sensible of the sacrifice of our fathers in the faith, confessing that apart from us their work cannot be made perfect, do dedicate ourselves anew to the worship and service of Almighty God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Prayer of Dedication

*(Then the district superintendent shall give an extemporaneous prayer of dedication, or use the following:)*

Almighty God, we are not worthy to offer unto You anything belonging

unto us. We humbly acknowledge that “except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.” Yet we ask that in Your great goodness you would accept the dedication of this place to Your service. Prosper this our undertaking. Receive the prayers and intercessions of all your servants who shall call upon You in this house. Give them grace to prepare their hearts to serve You with reverence and godly fear. Affect them with a solemn apprehension of Your divine majesty, and a deep sense of their own unworthiness. May they always approach Your sanctuary with lowliness and devotion. May they always come before You with clean thoughts and pure hearts, with bodies undefiled and minds sanctified. May they always perform a service acceptable to You, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### Hymn

*(Then the congregation shall join in singing a hymn, such as: “Lead On, O King Eternal.”)*

### Benediction

*(Then the pastor or other appointed minister shall pronounce the benediction:)*

May You, O Lord our God, make this house Your abiding place from this day forth, and let Your ministers be clothed with salvation, let Your saints rejoice in goodness all their days, as the blessings of God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit rest and abide upon them. Amen.

## B. Dedication of Parsonage

### 5975. Order of Dedication of a Parsonage.

*(At the time appointed for the dedication service, an appropriate hymn may be sung by the congregation or by a soloist or choir. Suitable numbers include: “Happy the Home When God Is There,” and “Bless This House.” Then the pastor or other appointed minister shall give an extemporaneous prayer. Then the pastor or other appointed minister shall give a scripture reading, such as 1 Cor. 9:7-10, 13-14. Then the district superintendent (cf. 1310:11) or representative shall address the congregation, saying:)*

The Scriptures clearly teach that as Aaron was divinely appointed to the priesthood, even so today persons are called to the ministry for the purpose of preaching the Word and otherwise giving aid and comfort to the spiritually needy. In the same divine program it is also “commanded that those who

preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14, NIV). Providing a house for the pastor is a recognition of the minister’s high office and great value to the church. It is a wise provision contributing to proper temporal support. This house about to be dedicated as a pastor’s home has been made possible by the generous gifts of those who are interested in the ministry and the church such ministry represents.

*(Then the trustees of the church shall come and stand before the district superintendent, and the chair of the trustees shall address the district superintendent, saying:)*

On behalf of the trustees, the members and this congregation, I present this house to be dedicated to God as the home for the person whom He has appointed to pastor this people.

*(Then the district superintendent may give an appropriate discourse, gratefully commending the people for providing this house and charging the pastor to live here in the fear of God and as a faithful servant of the people. Then the district superintendent shall offer a prayer of dedication, such as the following:)*

O most gracious Lord, we acknowledge that we are not worthy to offer unto You anything belonging to us. Yet we ask that You accept the dedication of this home to Your service, and that You will prosper this our undertaking.

Grant that whoever shall dwell in this house shall be so yielded and dedicated to Your service as “vessels sanctified and meet for the Master’s use, prepared unto every good work,” that their ministry shall be a heavenly benediction to all they meet.

Grant, O Lord, that whoever shall enter this the home of Your ministering servants shall be made to sense Your presence, and as they depart shall be strengthened to walk in Your holy commandments, and that all who minister to the material comforts of Your servants in this home shall be richly rewarded by You.

Grant, O Lord, that all who come to this home for spiritual counsel and comfort, shall be made both to perceive and know what things they ought to do, and may have power and strength to fulfill the same.

Grant, O Lord, that whoever shall be joined together in the holy estate of matrimony in this home may faithfully perform and keep the vow and covenant made between them, and may remain in perfect love together all of their lives.

Grant, O Lord, that at the family altar of this home, when prayer with thanksgiving and supplication shall be offered, that they may receive from Your hand such things as are necessary. Also, that as Your servants study and search Your Word, that divine illumination for life and duty may be given as

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in Your infinite wisdom You shall see to be most expedient for them.

All of this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our most blessed Lord and Savior. Amen.

*(Then the district superintendent shall address the congregation, saying:)*

I now declare this house duly set apart as the residence of the pastor of the \_\_\_\_\_ Wesleyan Church.

*(Then the district superintendent or other appointed minister shall pronounce the benediction:)*

The Lord bless you, and keep you: the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you: the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace. Amen.