

Moving to the New Church Sunday

Welcome

Welcome, each and every one, to this special day of praise and joy.

This is a day the Lord has made and we rejoice in God's goodness.

We have prayed and planned and worked together
For at least eight years to see this day happen.

Our worship theme is about God's faithfulness in the midst of change.

Faith is a life journey with departures and arrivals.

Our worship begins here in the old church with a departure

As we move to our new church for a new beginning.

Call to Worship

Come, let us worship God together,
for we are loved and blessed by God.

Come, let us receive with thanksgiving the gifts
offered by God's open hands.

We seek to be faithful to the One who has redeemed us
and calls us to be a community of hope and new beginnings.

May the Light of the World guide us on our journey today.

Prayer of Invocation

Good Shepherd and Guardian of the Flock,
we meet in your name, confident that we are known
and loved by you.

Here we draw close to you and to one another,
expecting to be empowered by fresh insights
to live joyfully as your people.

We come to thank you again for the past
and to embrace the future placed in our hands

in love and invitation.

Grant that through our worship today,
others may see the presence of the Living Christ in our hearts.

Come among us in spirit and in hope, we pray. Amen.

What do we take with us?

We don't need a long sermon today.
This is a day for going to our new church,
to sing and rejoice together in awe of God's blessings.

"What is it that we take with us?"

We would like to see each person carry something
from here to our new church.

_____ will carry a candle to remind us
that the Light of God's presence goes with us.
He will light that candle as our invocation.

I hope someone will carry the large Bible
we usually have on display.
We seek to center our lives in the Word of God.

The Guest Book in the foyer needs to come with us
as a sign of welcome and invitation.
Someone should bring that.

Everyone is asked to carry a hymn book.
We will use these hymn books in our worship.
We want to test how it sings in our new church.

_____ will carry a scissors for the ribbon cutting ceremony.

(If it is nice) We will all meet outside the front door
and cut the ribbon before anyone enters the sanctuary.

(If it is bad weather) We will all gather inside the foyer

to cut a ribbon to enter the sanctuary.

If there is something else you want to carry over to the new church, please do so.
If it is fastened to the floor or to the wall, it stays here.

The items that are to remain in this building are clearly marked.

But there is something much more important we take with us.

We take with us our faith in a God of love and compassion,
who calls us to imitate the life of Jesus in our world.

We take with us an unshakable trust in God's offer
of reconciliation to those who are not at peace
with God or with each other.

We take with us our own story of faith and discipleship
by which we seek to define who we are
and to what we are called to give witness.

We take with us nearly twenty years of experience
as a congregation called to be on mission in our community.
The vision that gave birth to this congregation,
now invites us to a new beginning;
a new chapter of invitation and outreach.

We take with us the challenge of our hopes and dreams
for the future, around which we intend
to build the agenda for our congregation.

We take with us the prayers and well wished of many friends
in this community, who have watched with interest
as our new church took shape on [church address].

And we take with us the example of Sarah and Abraham
who heard God say to them,
"Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house
to the land that I will show you.
...And I will bless you, and make your name great
so that you will be a blessing..." Genesis 12:1-2

We seek to translate our blessings into service in the name of Christ.

Transfer of Keys to New Owners

(Invite a representative of the new owner to join me up front)

Thank you for coming to be with us this morning.

I imagine you are about as excited as we are, to move to a new, larger facility for your community.

In _____ more days this building is officially yours.

We hope the building will serve you well, as it has served us for nearly _____ years.

We note that _____ years after we took possession of this building, we are still receiving mail for the former owners!

When our mail continues to arrive here,
we will continue sending change-of-address notices,
and we thank you for saving our mail till we can pick it up.

Thank you for buying this building and preserving it
as a place of worship and service.

I hand you these keys as a sign of our goodwill and blessing.

May God's peace always fill this place and your congregation.

Hand over some keys, with a warm handshake.

Prayer of Thanksgiving as we leave

Loving and Gracious God, we thank for all the blessings we have received from your hands in this place. As we leave this house of worship for the last time today, we pray for your blessings on this place and the people who will come here after we leave.

God of peace, bless us and all who come here, with your peace that we may learn to live together in gentleness and humility.

God of unending patience, bless us and all who come here, with patience that we may endure in times of misunderstanding and trial.

God of mercy, bless us and all who come here with your mercy, that we may find pardon when we have done wrong.

God of strength, bless us and all who come here, with your strength that we may stand firm when the storms of life assail us.

God of new beginnings, we pray for your blessings on our congregation. Grant us joy in the future you have given us, courage to translate our joy into action, and trust that you will always go with us on our journey.

As we go now to our church, give us love that reflects your forgiveness and grace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior, Amen.

Instructions for moving

We are ready now to travel to our new church facility.

As we leave this building, you may pick up a hymn book to carry with you to the new church.

If you are transporting any other item, pick it up and take it with you now.

Then put on your coats and promptly drive over to the new church.

We'll meet at (*the North front door*) for the ribbon cutting ceremony at (11:00 am)

Please drive very carefully!!

May the God of all new beginnings
Grant you joy as we move to our new church. Amen.

Fred Unruh (Canada), 1997. Lethbridge United Church
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