

# Guide for Ministers

NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH  
International



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## Appendix

### COMPETENCY PROFILES

# 1 Foreword

Ongoing developments in church life and society, as well as in the doctrine, require a new *Guide for Ministers* to be drafted. For example, our expanded liturgy was introduced in 2010, the *Catechism of the New Apostolic Church* in 2012, and the concept of ministry in 2019.

Last but not least, the introduction of the *Serving and Leading* model in 1998 set standards for the activity of our ministers.

This *Guide for Ministers* is also intended to promote the unity of the Church and impart security in church activities. It represents a global framework that largely guarantees the required flexibility and the necessary room to manoeuvre. The scope of its provisions takes into account the cultural differences that exist around the world, and allows the Regional Churches to issue additional regulations for their working areas.

While such church regulations are certainly necessary, the love for God and His people stands above everything.

May these guidelines make our work easier for all of us, and allow us to continue serving in a joyful and beneficial manner.

Jean-Luc Schneider

Zurich, April 2023

## 2 Fundamentals of exercising a ministry

All activity in the New Apostolic Church must be aligned with its Vision and Mission. The *Serving and Leading* model provides orientation to ministers and other functionaries of the Church on how to live up to this expectation and mould congregational life accordingly.

### 2.1 Vision and Mission of the New Apostolic Church

*Vision: A church in which people feel at home and, inspired by the Holy Spirit and their love for God, align their lives to the gospel of Jesus Christ and thus prepare themselves for His return and eternal life.*

*Mission: Reaching out to all people in order to teach them the gospel of Jesus Christ and to baptise them with water and the Holy Spirit. Providing soul care and cultivating a warm fellowship in which everyone shall experience the love of God and the joy of serving Him and others.*

The Vision statement shows the desired ideal image for which we strive, and describes the fundamental values that are binding for every church activity and action. The Mission statement is intended to awaken enthusiasm for the gospel and win human beings for God.

### 2.2 Serving and Leading model

The *Serving and Leading* model constitutes a uniform and binding foundation for the activity of the ministers. It serves to promote identification and motivation, and create transparency and trust. The short version of the model reads as follows:

- *Jesus Christ's doctrine and His exemplary activity are binding on our serving and leading in the New Apostolic Church, and decisive in dealing with our fellow human beings.*
- *Our work is to help all believers to attain eternal fellowship with God and become happy along the way.*
- *That which has proven itself, we preserve. The timely impulses of the Holy Spirit we put into action.*
- *Mutual esteem, openness, modesty, and confidentiality are prerequisites for working together with blessing, and result in a God-pleasing fellowship.*
- *Church authority is exercised with love and righteousness, and through an exemplary lifestyle.*
- *We preserve peace through prayer, dialogue, and the willingness to reconcile.*
- *We profess: God and His work are sacred to us!<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> *Serving and Leading in the New Apostolic Church*, first edition 2001, p. 18

## **3 Ministry**

A spiritual ministry constitutes authorisation, blessing, and sanctification issued through ordination for service in the church of Christ. It is exercised in the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> A ministry comprises ministerial authority as well as a ministerial mandate. The ministerial authority is of a theological nature, the ministerial mandate is of a canonical nature.

### **3.1 Ministerial order**

From its beginnings, the New Apostolic Church has understood itself as a church of ministry. It is led by the apostolate. All other ministries come forth out of the Apostle ministry. Today there are three ordained ministries in the New Apostolic Church, each with different spiritual powers: the Apostle ministry, the Priest ministry, and the Deacon ministry.<sup>3</sup> The Chief Apostle who exercises the Petrine office and the administration of the authority of the keys is ordained to his special service.

### **3.2 Ministerial authority**

Ministerial authority constitutes the right to act and speak in the name of the triune God, which is founded upon Jesus Christ and issued through the apostolate by way of ordination in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Ministerial authority is issued through ordination. It ends when the Apostle accepts the resignation of the minister, the minister is dismissed from his ministry, or at the time of the minister's death.

## **3.3 Holy acts associated with ministry and service**

### **3.3.1 Ordination of ministers**

Ordination is the investiture of a spiritual ministry. It is performed in the name of the triune God by the apostolate through laying on of hands and prayer. Authority, sanctification, and blessings are imparted in the ordination.

#### **3.3.1.1 Procedure**

The designation for a ministry is not based upon human will but upon the divine will. It is the task of the Apostles to recognise God's will and act in accordance with it in order to equip the congregations and districts with the necessary ministerial gifts in accordance with their respective needs and demands.

Proposals for ordination into a ministry should be submitted to the Apostles or District Apostles by the congregational and district leaders. Where possible, proposals for ordination into the Priest ministry should provide references about the candidate's ability to regularly preach the word of God in a divine service.

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<sup>2</sup> CNAC 7

<sup>3</sup> CNAC 7.6

Once a decision has been made about the ordination, the leading ministers of the congregation or the district arrange a meeting to discuss the ordination with the candidate. In this meeting, the prerequisites for the ministry and the duties related to it are discussed. To conclude the meeting, the candidate is asked whether he is prepared to assume the ministry. If possible, the partner of the candidate for ordination is also involved in the meeting.

### **3.3.1.2 Sequence and recommended wording**

### **3.3.1.3 Liturgical position in the divine service**

The ordination takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing.

### **3.3.1.4 Execution**

The ordination is performed by an Apostle.

## **Address**

The following content is recommended:

### *Deacon ministry*

- Deacons are designated by God for their ministry<sup>4</sup>.
- Personal gifts are blessed and sanctified for service in the Church.
- Within the framework of their ministerial mandate, Deacons receive the authority to
  - properly proclaim the word of God and
  - dispense the Trinitarian blessing (benediction).
- They are now part of the ministerial body of the respective congregation and district, and can be entrusted with duties corresponding to their ministry within this area
- They are called to serve God and their neighbour out of love and with their gifts, and to publicly profess their faith.
- They are to exemplify a lifestyle oriented to the gospel.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Fifth Article of Faith

<sup>5</sup> 1 Timothy 3: 8–13

### Priest ministry

- Priests are designated by God for their ministry.<sup>6</sup>
- They are blessed and sanctified to their priestly service.
- In addition to the powers conferred upon ordination to the Deacon ministry<sup>7</sup>, they receive the ministerial authority to
  - dispense the sacrament of Holy Baptism with water,
  - dispense the sacrament of Holy Communion,
  - pronounce the forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus Christ in the commission of their sender, the Apostle.
- They are able to perform acts of blessing such as confirmations, weddings, and funerals.

### Vow

The congregation is asked to rise. The Apostle asks the minister to be ordained a question to the following effect:

“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Are you prepared to accept the ministry of a (Deacon/Priest) in the congregation (...) and to exercise it in faithfulness to God, in oneness with the apostolate, and in accordance with the regulations of the Church?

Will you align your conduct of life with the gospel of Jesus Christ, serve those entrusted to you in the New Apostolic faith—as it comes to expression in the Creed—in humbleness and love for God and your neighbour? Then vow this with a yes!”

### Prayer (with epiclesis)<sup>8</sup>

The prayer can include the following:

- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow
- the plea for strength and the ability to keep this vow and fulfil the duties associated with the ministry
- the plea to God the Holy Spirit to grant blessing, sanctification, and authority

### Act

The ministry is received while the candidate kneels before the altar. The Apostle then lays his or her hands on the head of the minister to be ordained and speaks the following words:

*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the Deacon/Priest ministry. Receive from the apostolate of Jesus Christ the authority, sanctification, and blessing required to fulfil all of the duties associated with this ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit.”*

Thereafter the powers associated with the respective ministry are specifically stated.

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<sup>6</sup> Fifth Article of Faith

<sup>7</sup> If the minister has never exercised the ministry of a Deacon before, the powers inherent in the Deacon ministry must also be conferred upon him or her.

<sup>8</sup> Invocation of the Holy Spirit

“Receive the authority...

- **(Deacon ministry):** ...to properly proclaim the word of God and dispense the Trinitarian blessing at the end of the divine service.
- **(Priest ministry):** ...to perform Holy Baptism with water and to consecrate and dispense Holy Communion, as well as to proclaim the forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus Christ and in the commission of your sender, the Apostle. In addition, you are now authorised to perform ecclesiastical acts of blessing.

Further words of blessing and sanctification for the minister can follow thereafter:

- May God awaken, strengthen, and multiply the available gifts, and impart additional strengths.<sup>9</sup>
- With the ministry, which is holy, God grants the minister a share of His holiness. Holy acts can be performed in the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>10</sup>
- Proclaim and stand up for the gospel of Christ. Look after the believers entrusted to you for pastoral care, be an example to them, and promote their faith. Accompany them in prayer even in the pressures of natural life.<sup>11</sup>
- Contribute to the joy of those entrusted to your care and never consider yourself to be a lord over their faith.<sup>12</sup>
- May the joy of the Lord always be your strength.<sup>13</sup>
- The angels of the Lord accompany you on all your ways.

Mandatory conclusion:

*“The blessing of God accompany you. The peace of the Risen One be with you. Amen.”*



Photo 1: Ordination



Photo 2: Ordination

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<sup>9</sup> CNAC-QA 416

<sup>10</sup> CNAC-QA 417

<sup>11</sup> CNAC-QA 468

<sup>12</sup> 2 Corinthians 1: 24

<sup>13</sup> Nehemiah 8: 10

### **3.4 Ministerial mandate**

A distinction must be made between ministerial authority and the ministerial mandate. In the ministerial mandate ministers are given the right and responsibility to fulfil their tasks in the ministerial authority they have received, within a framework that is limited in terms of both duration and location.

The ministerial mandate ends when the minister moves outside the area for which his or her mandate applies, when he or she retires, after the Apostle accepts his or her resignation, when the minister is dismissed from his or her ministry, or dies.

#### **3.4.1 Working area**

Upon ordination, ministers receive the mandate to exercise their ministry within a firmly defined territorial framework.

#### **3.4.2 Exercising a ministry outside of the working area**

In special cases it is also possible for ministers to exercise their ministry outside of their own working area. This might include conducting a divine service, dispensing sacraments, or performing acts of blessing or funerals, or providing pastoral care to the sick. The agreement of the responsible District Apostles or Apostles must be secured.

#### **3.4.3 Exercising a ministry in retirement**

The ministerial mandate ends with the retirement of the minister. The District Apostle or Apostle can issue a mandate to retired ministers to continue to perform specific ministerial acts or divine services for a limited time, with their agreement.

### **3.5 Exercise of a previously held ministry**

Personal or health-related reasons may make it impossible for ministers to perform all of the duties associated with their ministry. However, it may still be possible for them to serve in a ministry they have previously held. In these situations, the Apostle can issue a ministerial mandate allowing them to exercise their previously held ministry. In such cases, ministers will no longer be permitted to exercise the higher ministerial authority that had been conferred upon them. The Apostle can once again expand the ministerial mandate, provided that the reasons that were preventing them from exercising the full scope of their mandate are no longer present.

### **3.6 Leave of absence**

Ministers can be given a leave of absence from their ministry. The duration of such a leave should not extend beyond a period of three years. During the period of the leave, it will be necessary to maintain a close pastoral relationship with the minister in question.

### **3.6.1 Possible reasons for a leave of absence**

Reasons for granting ministers a leave of absence from exercising their ministry may include:

- personal, professional, or health-related reasons
- disagreement with the New Apostolic Creed or significant doctrinal statements of the New Apostolic Church
- a minister's sustained breach of essential ministerial duties
- damage to the reputation of the New Apostolic Church resulting from the minister's conduct

### **3.6.2 Procedure**

The leave of absence may be effected by the Apostle or District Apostle, at the request of the minister, or at the instigation of the congregational or district leadership. The minister is to be informed of the reasons for the leave of absence.

If the leave of absence is not initiated at the minister's own request, the minister should be granted a hearing before it is put into effect. The reasons for, and the duration of, the leave of absence are to be documented if possible. The affected congregations are to be informed about the minister's leave of absence in consultation with the affected minister, if possible.

### **3.6.3 Repealing a leave of absence**

If the reasons for a leave of absence no longer exist, the leaders responsible decide whether to repeal the leave of absence in consultation with the minister in question so that he or she may resume his or her ministerial activity. The congregations affected are to be informed of this decision.

## **3.7 Reinstatement of ministers**

If ministers move to another working area, they must be reinstated in their ministry in this new area. This occurs by way of an express ministerial mandate (reinstatement) issued by the responsible District Apostle or Apostle.

If the ministers are not to be reinstated in their new place of residence, either temporarily or permanently, or are not willing to be reinstated, either temporarily or permanently, a decision must be made as to whether to give them an early retirement, accept their resignation, dismiss them from ministry, or extend their leave of absence, depending on the individual situation.

### **3.7.1 Procedure**

Before reinstating a minister, an inquiry must first be made with the District Apostle or Apostle of the previous Regional Church as to whether there are any reasons standing in the way of a reinstatement. Thereafter the minister in question is asked if he or she is prepared to continue exercising his or her ministry.

If there are reservations about a reinstatement, these are to be communicated to the minister in timely fashion. It may be necessary to grant him or her a leave of absence. If a later reinstatement is ruled out, a decision must be made in consultation with the minister as to whether he or she will resign from ministry or whether he or she will be dismissed from ministry.

### 3.7.2 Liturgical position in the divine service

With respect to liturgy, the reinstatement takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

### 3.7.3 Procedure

The reinstatement of a minister in a priestly or diaconal ministry is usually performed by the district rector.

#### Act

The reinstatement is performed while the minister stands before the altar. The officiating minister shakes the hand of the minister being reinstated and speaks the following words:

*“(By commission of the Apostle), I hereby reinstate you to your ministerial mandate (in the district/in the congregation of...) as a (ministerial designation). May God also strengthen and accompany you in the future in your new working area.”*

## 3.8 Retirement of ministers

Retirement is an act in which ministers are relieved of their ministerial mandate, either because they have reached the age of retirement or for other reasons. The ministerial authority remains. However, retired ministers are no longer permitted to exercise this authority unless the Apostle assigns them a special mandate.

As a rule, retirement takes place after ministers complete their 65th year. After consulting with the minister in question, the responsible District Apostle or Apostle can determine whether to extend the ministerial activity in individual situations. The retirement should occur before the minister celebrates his or her 70th birthday. No pressure is to be applied to ministers with respect to any extension in their ministerial activity.

In justified individual cases, an early retirement may also be performed.

### 3.8.1 Sequence and recommended wording

#### 3.8.1.1 Liturgical position in the divine service

The retirement of a minister takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

#### 3.8.1.2 Execution

The retirement of a minister is usually performed by the Apostle or a minister in a priestly ministry designated by the Apostle.

## Act

The officiating minister expresses thanks to the retiring minister in front of the altar for his or her service and commitment.

The officiant then shakes the minister's hand and releases him or her (if applicable, by commission of the Apostle) from his or her ministerial mandate. In the process, the officiant points out that the ministerial authority remains intact.

This occurs with the following words:

*("By commission of the Apostle,") "I hereby release you from your ministerial mandate. The ministerial authority you have received will remain intact."*

### **3.9 Resignation from ministry**

A resignation is an ordained minister's personal declaration of intent to resign from ministry. It takes effect when the Apostle accepts this declaration of intent. His or her ministerial authority thus expires and the ministerial mandate ends.

Before the resignation is accepted, however, there should be a discussion with the minister concerned about the motivations for his or her request, and pastoral assistance should be offered as needed. The resignation should be documented in writing if possible and announced to the congregation. In consultation with the minister in question, the officiant may also express gratitude for his or her service to the congregation after the divine service.

### **3.10 Dismissal from ministry**

When a minister is dismissed from his ministry, the Apostle pronounces the withdrawal of both the ministerial authority and the ministerial mandate. The decision regarding a dismissal from ministry is made by the District Apostle in consultation with the responsible Apostle.

This measure can be taken if there are grounds for a lengthy leave of absence, or if other serious factors exist which would have an enduring and detrimental impact on the trustworthiness required of the minister. Even retired ministers can be dismissed from their ministries.

#### **3.10.1 Procedure**

If there is any indication that conditions for dismissal from ministry exist, they are to be openly discussed with the minister in question, and he or she is to be given an opportunity for comment. If possible, a leading minister should have a personal discussion with the minister in question. The conversation should be documented if possible.

If possible, the dismissal from ministry is to be communicated to the minister in writing, and is to specify the reasons for dismissal. The affected congregation is to be informed about the minister's dismissal in a timely manner, while respecting the former minister's personality rights.

### **3.11 Re-ordination**

A former minister who has either resigned or been dismissed from ministry can be newly ordained to ministry at a later point in time.

### **3.12 Appointment of ministers**

An appointment is the allocation of a service associated with a spiritual ministry, which involves a leadership function within the congregation, district, Regional Church, or Global Church.

In the appointment, ministers receive sanctification and blessing. It is effected while taking into account the personal competencies (such as pastoral, doctrinal, and organisational qualities) required for the services associated with the respective leadership function. Before the laying on of hands, the aid and support of the Holy Spirit are requested in prayer for the fulfilment of these services. Ministers receive the appointment while kneeling.

#### **3.12.1 Procedure**

The regulations governing the preparation of a minister for an appointment are analogous to those pertaining to the ordination of ministers.<sup>14</sup>

It is recommended that the planned appointment of ministers to a leadership function be announced in advance.

#### **3.12.2 Sequence and recommended wording**

##### **3.12.2.1 Liturgical position in the divine service**

The appointment takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

##### **3.12.2.2 Execution**

The appointment is performed by the Apostle or a priestly minister designated by him or her for this purpose.

#### **Address**

The following basic content is recommended:

##### *District rector*

- The district rector is responsible for several congregations in both a spiritual and an organisational respect.
- This implies advocating the doctrine in accordance with the New Apostolic Creed and Catechism, and preaching the gospel in its purity. In addition, he or she will see to it that the other ministers do the same.
- This service includes pastoral care, ensuring pastoral care in the church district, and providing for the spiritual ministries and services (teachers, youth leaders) in the church district.

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<sup>14</sup> Chapter Ordination of ministers

### Congregational rector

- The congregational rector is responsible for one congregation in both a spiritual and an organisational respect.
- This implies advocating the doctrine in accordance with the New Apostolic Creed and Catechism, and preaching the gospel in its purity. In addition, he or she will see to it that the other ministers do the same.
- This service includes pastoral care, ensuring pastoral care in the congregation, and providing for the spiritual ministries and services (teachers, youth leaders) in the congregation.
- Those appointed to congregational leadership see to it that the members of the congregation can engage themselves with their gifts for the benefit of all.

### Vow

The congregation is asked to rise. The minister to be appointed is now asked a question to the following effect:

“By commission of the Apostle,” “I now ask you before God and the congregation: Are you prepared to carry out your appointment as a (designation) in the (working area of ...), in faithfulness to God, in oneness with the apostolate, and in accordance with the regulations of the Church? Then vow this with a yes!”

### Prayer (with epiclesis<sup>15</sup>)

The prayer can include the following:

- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow.
- the plea for strength and the ability to keep this vow and fulfil the duties associated with the ministry.
- the plea to God the Holy Spirit to grant blessing and sanctification through the appointment.

### Act

The appointment is received while kneeling in front of the altar. It is received through the laying on of hands upon the head of the minister in question and is performed with the following words:

*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the appointment to work as a (district rector/congregational rector). May the triune God bless you and sanctify you in order to fulfil all the duties associated with this appointment in the mind of Jesus Christ!”*

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<sup>15</sup> The invocation of the Holy Spirit



*Photo 3: Appointment*

This can be followed by further words of blessing with the following content:

- May God awaken, strengthen, and multiply the available gifts that are necessary for the fulfilment of your leadership task.<sup>16</sup>
- May God grant you the wisdom to make decisions that will serve for the preservation and growth of the (district/congregation).
- Always perform your duty in love for all members of the (district/congregation) and in oneness with the apostolate.
- Watch over that which is entrusted to your care, such that the gospel of Jesus Christ can be spread in a manner that corresponds to the teaching of the Apostles.
- See to it that the regulations of the Church, as determined by the apostolate, are observed.

Mandatory conclusion:

*“The blessing of God accompany you. The peace of the Risen One be with you. Amen.”*

### **3.13 Assignment**

#### **3.13.1 Assignment of ministers**

An assignment is the allocation of a service in support of a leading minister.

##### **3.13.1.1 Procedure**

When preparing ministers for assignments, the same kinds of regulations apply as to the preparation for ordination.<sup>17</sup>

It is recommended that the planned assignment of ministers be announced in advance.

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<sup>16</sup> CNAC-QA 416

<sup>17</sup> Chapter 3.3.1

### **3.13.1.2 Sequence and recommended wording**

### **3.13.1.3 Liturgical position in the divine service**

Assignments take place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

### **3.13.1.4 Execution**

Assignments are performed by a member of the apostolate or a priestly minister designated by him or her for this purpose.

### **Address**

The following content is recommended:

#### *Bishop*

- The Bishop is the assistant to the Apostle and his or her closest associate, who supports him or her in pastoral care and teaching activities.
- The Bishop may support ministers who have been entrusted with the leadership of districts and congregations, as necessary.
- Members and ministers who need special attention are to receive sensitive pastoral care from the Bishop.

#### *Delegate of the district rector*

- The delegate of the district rector is the latter's assistant, and supports him or her in pastoral care and teaching activities.
- If necessary, he or she supports the ministers responsible for the leadership of congregations.
- Members and ministers who need special attention are to receive sensitive pastoral care from the delegate of the district rector.

#### *Delegate of the congregational rector*

- The delegate of the congregational rector is the latter's assistant, and supports him or her in pastoral care and teaching activities.
- If necessary, he or she supports the ministers in the congregation in their ministerial activities.
- Members and ministers who need special attention are to receive sensitive pastoral care from the delegate of the congregational rector.

## Vow

The congregation is asked to rise. The minister to be assigned is then asked a question to the following effect:

“(By commission of the Apostle,) I now ask you before God and the congregation: Are you prepared to support your Apostle/district rector/congregational rector in his or her leadership function in (working area), in faithfulness to God, in oneness with the apostolate, and in accordance with the regulations of the Church? Then vow this with your yes!”

## Prayer (with epiclesis<sup>18</sup>)

The prayer can include the following:

- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow
- the plea for strength and the ability to keep this vow and fulfil the duties associated with this assignment
- the plea to God the Holy Spirit to help the assigned ministers in this assignment.

## Act

The assignment is performed standing in front of the altar. The officiating minister shakes the hand of the minister to be assigned and speaks the following words:

*“I hereby assign you as a (function: Bishop/delegate of the district rector/delegate of the congregational rector). May the triune God bless and strengthen you such that you are able to fulfil all the duties associated with this assignment.”*

- Thereafter all the duties associated with the respective assignment are listed.
- Further blessings can be added in conclusion.



*Photo 4: Assignment to a service bound to a ministry*

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<sup>18</sup> Invocation of the Holy Spirit

### **3.13.2 Assignment to services that are not bound to a spiritual ministry**

Members or ministers who are to serve over a longer period on either a district or congregational level, as the primarily responsible teacher—be it in Pre-Sunday School, Sunday School, Religious Instruction, or Confirmation Instruction—or as the primarily responsible youth leader will be assigned to these services.<sup>19</sup>

#### **3.13.2.1 Procedure**

The minister responsible for the assignment is to discuss the scope and expectations of the spiritual service in question with the members who have been selected to perform it.

#### **3.13.2.2 Sequence and recommended wording**

##### **3.13.2.3 Liturgical position in the divine service**

The assignment of members or ministers to a duty that is not bound to a ministry can take place either during or following the divine service, in the presence of the congregation, or in the circle of those whom the assigned individual is to serve.

If it takes place during the divine service, it is performed following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

##### **3.13.2.4 Execution**

The assignment is performed by the responsible priestly minister.

### **Address**

Among other things, the following content is recommended:

#### *Teachers<sup>20</sup>*

- The teacher has the task of supporting parents in their responsibility of raising their children in the New Apostolic faith.
- This support is provided by instructing the children using the teaching material provided by the Church.
- The teacher is to support the children in developing their own personal faith. This includes emphasising the value of prayer and the divine services and of encouraging them to acquaint themselves with the content of the New Apostolic faith.
- The teacher acts in consultation with, and by mandate of, the district rector or congregational rector.

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<sup>19</sup> In the case of teachers and youth leaders of equal status, the District Apostle decides on the procedure.

<sup>20</sup> CNAC 12.4.1

### Youth leaders<sup>21</sup>

- The youth leader is the personal contact who is to support the young people in their various situations of life and questions of faith.
- He or she encourages the young members to engage their gifts and abilities in the many diverse areas of activity within the congregation, to practise their faith, and to profess and advocate it in their surroundings.
- The youth leader acts in consultation with, and by mandate of, the district rector or congregational rector.

### Vow

The congregation is asked to rise. The brother or sister to be assigned is then asked a question to the following effect:

“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Are you prepared to henceforth assist your district rector/congregational rector in humbleness and faithfulness to provide pastoral care to the children/young people? Are you prepared to serve the children/young people entrusted to your care in the love of Jesus Christ? Then vow this to God with your yes!”

### Prayer

The prayer can include the following:

- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow.
- the plea for strength and the ability to fulfil the associated duties.
- the plea to God to support the assigned individual.

### Act

The assignment is performed while standing in front of the altar. The officiating minister shakes the hand of the designated teacher or youth leader and assigns him or her with the following words:

*“I hereby assign you as a (designation: teacher or youth leader). May the triune God bless and strengthen you so that you are able to fulfil all the tasks associated with this assignment.”*

- Thereafter all the duties associated with the respective assignment are listed.
- Further blessings can be added in conclusion.

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<sup>21</sup> CNAC 12.4.2



*Photo 5: Assignment to a service without a ministry*

### **3.14 Termination**

#### **3.14.1 Termination of an appointment or assignment**

##### **3.14.1.1 Procedure**

The minister can, at any time, ask to be relieved of his or her appointment or assignment. If the Apostle decides to terminate an appointment or assignment, he or she or another minister specifically selected for this purpose informs the minister in question of the reasons for this decision. The date of the termination should be decided in consultation with the minister in question. This also applies if a time limit has been established right from the start of the appointment or assignment. The congregation or the district should be informed of the termination of the appointment or assignment in a timely manner.

##### **3.14.1.2 Liturgical position in the divine service**

The termination of an appointment or an assignment takes place following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

##### **3.14.1.3 Execution**

The termination of an appointment is performed by the Apostle or by a priestly minister designated by him or her.

#### **Act**

In front of the altar, the officiating minister expresses thanks to the minister in question for his or her service and commitment. Thereafter the officiant shakes his or her hand and releases him or her from the appointment or assignment with words to the following effect:

“By commission of the Apostle,) I hereby release you from your appointment/assignment as a (designation) in the (working area of ...).”

### **3.14.2 Termination of an assignment to services that are not bound to a ministry**

#### **3.14.2.1 Liturgical position in the divine service**

The termination of an assignment can take place either during or after the divine service, either in the presence of the congregation or the circle of those whom the person was assigned to serve.

If the termination of the assignment takes place during a divine service, it will be performed following the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

#### **3.14.2.2 Execution**

The termination of an assignment is performed by the Apostle or a priestly minister designated by him or her.

#### **Act**

The officiating minister expresses thanks to the person in question for his or her service and commitment. He or she then shakes the person's hand and terminates the assignment with words to the following effect:

("By commission of the Apostle,) I hereby release you from your assignment as a (designation)."

### **3.15 Documentation of ordination, appointment, assignment**

Apostles ensure the timely documentation of all measures taken in association with the ordination, appointment, assignment, and retirement of ministers, including leaves of absence and terminations.

### **3.16 Prerequisites for a ministry**

It is God Himself who designates an individual for a ministry. Thus the ministry is not a human work, nor is it ultimately that of the congregation. Rather it is God's gift to His church. A person bears his or her ministry on the basis of divine will and not human decision. Although ministers are chosen by God, it may nevertheless happen that they do not live up to the demands of their ministry or even fail in it. Nevertheless, this does not call into question the original call of God.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> CNAC 2.4.5 The Fifth Article of Faith

The ministries are independent of the character of the persons who bear them. Upon ordination, the gifts which ordained ministers possess as individuals are placed into the service of the congregation through blessing and sanctification. They can develop further in the course of one's ministerial exercise, and other gifts and talents may also be revealed. The character and gifts of the persons ordained as ministers should be suited to managing the powers issued in the ordination in an appropriate manner. If the required conditions are not present, it cannot be assumed that any lacking talents will be compensated by the ordination.

### **3.16.1 Self-conception of the minister**

The Catechism describes the self-conception of the Apostles.<sup>23</sup> Remarks to similar effect also apply to every minister ordained by the Apostle. Since "authority, blessing, and sanctification for their (the ministers') ministration" come forth out of the Apostle ministry, every minister stands in an indissoluble relationship to the Apostle ministry.<sup>24</sup> As servants of God, the ministers provide pastoral care to those entrusted to them, and treat each of them in accordance with the commandment to love their neighbour.

### **3.16.2 The Creed**

Ministers always receive their ministry together with the direction that it is to be exercised on the basis of the New Apostolic Creed. This presupposes that the ministers are familiar with the contents of the Creed and that they identify with it. The believer is entitled to experience the doctrine in binding fashion through the activity of the ministers. If a minister advocates beliefs that contradict the New Apostolic Creed, he or she cannot exercise a ministry. This is to be made clear to every future minister during the meeting at which the ordination is discussed.

### **3.16.3 Age**

As a rule, members to be ordained should have reached the age of majority.

### **3.16.4 Competency profiles**

The competency profiles included in the Appendix are to be taken into account when selecting and training ministers.

### **3.16.5 Lifestyle**

#### **3.16.5.1 Matrimony**

Marriage is the lifelong union between a man and woman desired by God, upon which His blessing rests. It also forms the foundation for the family. It is based on a free and voluntary public expression of fidelity by both partners. Mutual love and fidelity are indispensable factors in the success of a marriage. God's blessing is an important and valuable foundation for marriage and family life.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> CNAC 7.6.3

<sup>24</sup> CNAC 2.4.5 The Fifth Article of Faith

<sup>25</sup> CNAC 13.3

A monogamous marriage is a divine institution and not only a human institution. A polygamous marriage, that is marriage with multiple spouses, is not in accordance with Christian teaching and values. The fact that God has explicitly anchored the protection of marriage within the Ten Commandments underscores the importance and value of marriage as a divine institution.<sup>26</sup>

The activity of the minister does not require him or her to be married, however, a minister is expected to credibly profess matrimony as a Christian standard for the union between man and woman. In their matrimony, married ministers should thus endeavour to practise the Christian values of

- genuine love,
- serious commitment,
- enduring fidelity, and
- mutual support.

### **3.16.5.2 Cohabitation**

While taking into consideration the traditional, cultural, and social circumstances, the District Apostle issues regulations governing the situation of ministers who live in civil partnerships.

If a Deacon is cohabitating with his or her partner, the Apostle, Bishop, or district rector will assess the situation at the direction of the District Apostle, and make a decision as to whether it is possible for him or her to continue in the exercise of his or her ministry. The Church has particular expectations concerning the conduct of life of a priestly minister. If a priestly minister is cohabiting with a partner, the District Apostle should assess the situation and make a decision and, if need be, delegate this to the responsible Apostle.

## **3.17 Initiation into ministry, appointment, or service**

As soon as possible after their ordination, appointment, or assignment, ministers should be familiarised with the associated duties. The District Apostle will issue the necessary regulations for this purpose.

## **3.18 Training**

The District Apostles will arrange for the training of the ministers in their Regional Churches. The ministers will make the endeavour to further develop their abilities by participating in training events.

## **3.19 Rights**

The following outlines the rights of the ministers in association with their Church activity.

### **3.19.1 Consent to ordination, appointment, and assignment**

The agreement of the individual in question is to be secured before the ordination, appointment, or assignment.

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<sup>26</sup> CNAC 13.3.1

### **3.19.2 Information rights**

Ministers receive the information they need in order to fulfil their duties on an ongoing basis. The ministers with leadership functions guarantee the necessary flow of information.

### **3.19.3 Participation in meetings and divine services for ministers**

Ministers are entitled to participate in meetings and divine services for ministers.

### **3.19.4 Care and recuperation**

In the exercise of their ministry, ministers are covered by the care and protection of the Church. Within the scope of its abilities, the Church endeavours to provide them with appropriate help and support in conflicts and problem situations that have come into being within the scope of their ministerial activity.

Ministers with leadership functions will ensure that permanent situations of minister overload are avoided, and will see to it that the necessary scope for personal recreation is maintained.

### **3.19.5 Pastoral care**

Like all members of the congregation, the ministers and their families also have a right to individual and personal pastoral care.

### **3.19.6 Right to a hearing**

Ministers are to be given a fair hearing before any decisions are made with regard to the exercise of their ministry. Beyond that, they have the right to approach the responsible leading ministers in any Church matter.

### **3.19.7 Retirement**

Ministers have the right to be retired upon reaching the age limit for active ministry.<sup>27</sup> They can request an early retirement for personal or health reasons.

### **3.19.8 Resignation from ministry**

Ministers have the right to resign from their ministry at any time. This resignation from ministry will only take effect once it is accepted by the Apostle, however.<sup>28</sup>

## **3.20 Obligations**

By giving their consent to be ordained, ministers also assume the responsibility to perform the following duties.

### **3.20.1 Connection to the apostolate**

Ministers cannot perform their duties on the basis of their own abilities, but rather only in oneness with the apostolate and in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Apostle ministry is authoritative for doctrine and serves as a model for the proclamation of God's word by the other ministries. For this reason, ministers endeavour to spend time together with the Apostles of their working area in divine services and ministers' meetings.

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<sup>27</sup> Chapter 3.8

<sup>28</sup> Chapter 3.9

### **3.20.2 Advocating the doctrine**

Ministers have the duty to proclaim and advocate the unadulterated gospel of Christ. They are obligated to the doctrine as it is described in the *Catechism of the New Apostolic Church*. The preaching of the ministers and their statements in pastoral care meetings and teaching events should always be in harmony with the doctrine. In particular, ministers are to advocate the New Apostolic Creed both in the Church environment and in the private sphere.

Any questions of faith that arise in ministers' meetings or in discussions can be addressed with leading ministers. If ministers feel incapable of advocating the doctrine in its entirety, even after intensive soul-searching, they are to seek a meeting with the Apostle.

### **3.20.3 Compliance with Church regulations**

The regulations and instructions of the Regional Church apply to the exercise of the ministerial mandate in both a spiritual and administrative respect. Leading ministers are responsible for ensuring that these regulations are fulfilled.

In the interest of unity, the individual does not arbitrarily interpret decisions, instructions, or guidelines.

### **3.20.4 Impartiality**

Ministers stand in service to God. They provide care to the members of the congregation entrusted to them, and promote their faith and knowledge. In caring for their souls, they sympathise with their personal concerns, pray with them, and help them carry the burdens of daily life. Such pastoral care requires personal neutrality, and presupposes that ministers make no distinctions with respect to gender, social status, colour of skin, tribal affiliation, ethnicity, or basic convictions when it comes to the care of those entrusted to them.

### **3.20.5 Duty to refuse benefits**

With few exceptions, the ministers of the New Apostolic Church exercise their ministerial mandate voluntarily and without remuneration. They are obliged to handle offerings and Church assets conscientiously and with care. Ministers must avoid even the slightest impression that they would be receptive to personal benefits within the scope of their ministerial exercise. They are not permitted to accept gifts, bequests, or other monetary benefits in relation to their ministry or in exchange for individual ministerial acts. In exceptional cases, they will seek the approval of the District Apostle or the Apostle.

### **3.20.6 Confidentiality**

All ministers of the New Apostolic Church are subject to the duty of confidentiality. This includes all facts, information, and events of which they become aware in the scope of their ecclesiastical or pastoral activity that are not already public knowledge. The duty of confidentiality is unlimited in duration, and thus also continues to apply even after a minister's retirement.

The pastoral care of the believers requires the contents of conversations to be treated confidentially and not passed on to others. This includes, for example, marital, familial, health-related, and financial circumstances, as well as any matters pertaining to lifestyle, condition of faith, or problems in faith. As a general rule, ministers are only permitted to pass along information from pastoral discussions to a superior minister if they have the express consent of the individual concerned.

Without the consent of the affected parties, information can only be passed along to a superior ministry if there is an irrefutable need. This is particularly the case in the event that

- considerable damage is to be feared on the part of the Church (for example in the case of breaches of duty on the part of ministers)
- a serious offence is intended or ongoing
- there are indications of specific dangers to the lives or well-being of congregational members (for example, if someone has expressed their intent to commit suicide).

If there is no possibility of consulting ministers in leadership positions, the minister will decide independently whether to inform the state authorities, and will inform his or her leaders afterward.

The regulations of the Regional Church with respect to data protection apply here.

### **3.20.7 Ministers working together**

Ministers' meetings serve to promote knowledge and oneness, to strengthen faith, to discuss guidelines and instructions from the Church's leaders, to coordinate matters of pastoral care, organisation, and administration, as well as to cultivate fellowship. Every minister will endeavour to participate regularly in ministers' meetings.

Ministers support one another in the fulfilment of their Church duties. They actively support the decision-making process by consulting and making proposals for better Church offers and their organisation. Decisions made by leading ministers are loyally supported and advocated.

### **3.20.8 Duty of disclosure**

Ministers are obliged to inform the Church leadership of any issues of concern that could cause significant material or non-material damage to the Church. This applies especially with respect to suspected cases of sexual assault in pastoral care or the improper handling of monetary offerings.

Ministers will inform leading ministers about any changes to their personal circumstances if these will make their ministerial activity impossible or have a significant negative impact on it.

Convictions for criminal offences can be an impediment to the exercise of one's ministry. If a minister is expected to be convicted by a court for a criminal offence, the District Apostle or Apostle are to be informed.

### **3.20.9 Loyalty and good conduct**

In order to preserve the authority of the ministry and trust in the proper exercise of their ministry, ministers endeavour to maintain an unblemished reputation within and outside of the congregation. From this arises an obligation to maintain integrity and honesty, work together in trust with other ministers, behave respectfully toward superior ministers, and preserve peace within the Church. Beyond that, ministers are committed to keeping their financial affairs in good order.

Ministers see to it that the opinions they express within and outside of the congregation are in harmony with Christian values. Critical assessments of internal Church conflicts or the conduct of leading ministers or the Church's leadership may certainly be discussed directly with the parties concerned, but not expressed publicly.

### **3.20.10 Conflicts with professional interests**

If ministers discover that their professional interests or obligations are incompatible with individual Church duties, they will make the Church leadership aware of the situation. The question of how to deal with a minister's conflicts of interest will be resolved on a case-by-case basis.

### **3.20.11 Restraint in political activity**

As New Apostolic Christians, even ministers can be active in public life and accept political office. They must ensure, however, that they do not exert any influence on the political views and activities of the members of the congregation through their conduct.

### **3.20.12 Protection from sexual violence**

The New Apostolic Church strongly disapproves of any actions that infringe upon a person's sexual self-determination. Protection from sexual violence is a duty incumbent on society as a whole, and the New Apostolic Church and its ministers are likewise committed to this duty. This applies in particular to cases of sexual violence against children and the vulnerable sector, which can unfortunately be found in all cultures, social classes, and institutions.

The New Apostolic Church does not tolerate sexual assault by ministers or members in the exercise of their church duties. Well-founded cases of suspicion are to be reported immediately to the relevant authorities established under the laws of the respective country, and the regulations of the Regional Church must be aligned accordingly.

The District Apostles issue regulations for the prevention and handling of sexual assault in pastoral care, and for co-operation with law enforcement authorities of the state.

## **3.21 Consequences of breaching ministerial obligations**

If ministers are guilty of violating their obligations, the following measures are to serve as a warning and help to ensure that the relationship of trust between the members of the congregation and their ministers remains intact. Measures can even be taken against retired ministers if a breach of duty, in the circumstances of a particular case, is especially liable to significantly impact confidence in their ministry or the reputation of the Church.

### 3.21.1 Disciplinary measures

Leading ministers will confidentially—and in an open and respectful manner—discuss with the individuals in question any deficiencies in the exercise of their ministry of which they become aware, in the spirit of the *Serving and Leading* model. If this does not lead to the necessary change in conduct, or if there are any indications of a breach of duty that would enduringly disturb the relationship of trust with members of the congregation, leading ministers, or the Church's leadership, a leave of absence<sup>29</sup> or dismissal from ministry<sup>30</sup> may be imposed.

In the case of ministers who work for the Church on a full-time basis, the provisions of labour law must remain unaffected by these disciplinary measures.

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<sup>29</sup> Chapter 3.6

<sup>30</sup> Chapter 3.10

## 4 The divine service

### 4.1 General notes concerning the divine service

The term “liturgy”, which derives from the ancient Greek word *leiturgeia* (“public service”), denotes the prescribed sequence of the divine service, as well as the words, actions, and gestures it involves. On the one hand, divine service constitutes God’s service upon human beings, which becomes evident in the sermon inspired by the Holy Spirit, the celebration of the sacraments, and the benediction. On the other hand, divine service also constitutes our service to God, which is expressed in song, prayer, and profession.

The divine service has its origin in the historical self-revelation of the triune God. Its purpose is to remind believers of this self-revelation of God, but also to make it directly tangible and perceptible through word and sacrament. For this reason, the divine service has the function of imparting salvation. The individual elements of the divine service—the preaching of the word, the celebration and dispensation of the sacraments, prayer, and blessing—are thus not arbitrary, but rather necessary. The specific way in which these elements are configured and the specific course of the service is characterised by the time and its circumstances. Thus it is quite understandable for the external structure of divine services to change over the course of time. The sequence of the divine service is bindingly defined by the apostolate, which is responsible for the order of the Church.

A divine service is fundamentally a public event, because it is the Christian congregation’s act of profession before the world. In order for such a community to come into being, it is necessary for at least one person to attend the divine service. New Apostolic divine services are always led by clergy members who have been authorised to do so by the apostolate.

The New Apostolic divine service is characterised by its simplicity and focus on the sermon and the sacraments. However, this does not mean that the liturgical event as a whole is of a secondary nature. Rather, it requires great concentration, because an essential task of the ministers is to make God’s presence and holiness accessible and perceptible in the divine services.

#### The sermon

The word of God inspired by the Holy Spirit bestows and sustains divine life. It is audible in the sermon, which is intended to make the will of God known. This requires sanctification and diligent preparation for the sermon on the part of the ministers.

#### The sacraments

The divine Word from which all speech of God emanates is Jesus Christ, the eternal Word by whom all things were made.<sup>31</sup> The sacraments—Holy Baptism with water, Holy Sealing, and Holy Communion—are also founded in Jesus Christ. In them human beings experience God’s activity of salvation. In the sacraments, this divine Word who became flesh in Jesus can be experienced by the believer with particular clarity.

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<sup>31</sup> John 1: 1-3

## The prayers

The prayers which are spoken are a dialogue with God and constitute the human response to God's devotion, which is actually quite incomprehensible to mankind. Through them, human beings show that they wish to have fellowship with God and receive orientation from Him.

The Lord's Prayer, which is spoken collectively, also has a character of profession. Divine services are therefore a fellowship of word, sacrament, and profession.

## The spiritual hymns

The spiritual hymns sung (or performed instrumentally) in a divine service are an expression of fellowship within the assembled congregation. The song texts not only bind the members of the congregation to one another but also to God. Spiritual hymns also give the divine service a festive atmosphere that facilitates access to God's activity for each participant.

## The benediction

The benediction in the triune name of God at the end of a divine service is to accompany the believers into their everyday lives. They can trust in God's grace, can feel sheltered in His love, and can be certain of the guidance of the Holy Spirit. They are assured of God's protecting presence in their lives, such that they may live in accordance with the gospel.

## Additional points to be observed

All ministers must always be aware of God's presence in the divine service when carrying out their work. This already begins when they enter the assembled congregation. Everything that takes place in a divine service should be carried out solemnly, with the greatest possible calm and dignity.

Ministers involved in proclaiming the word must additionally be aware that they stand at the altar of God and proclaim His word! They should therefore pay attention to their way of speaking, their choice of words, and their conduct in the divine service. Ministers are not to mumble or speak monotonously, but rather understandably, with a lively voice, and not too quickly.

Visual contact with the congregation during the sermon creates an atmosphere of openness and personal closeness. Appropriate facial expressions and gestures should accompany the words and make them more understandable.

The congregation rises for collective prayers. Ministers and the congregation close their eyes during all prayers. Eyes can be kept open during other elements of the liturgy (Trinitarian formula, absolution, acts of blessing, dispensation of sacraments, etc.).

Each time the serving minister says "Amen", the congregation responds with "Amen".

## Preparing and clearing the altar

The altar must be prepared before the congregation arrives. The chalices should remain on the altar after the divine service until the members have said their goodbyes and have left the room in which the service took place.

## Closing remarks

The divine service—which is an encounter between God and human beings—is an anticipated experience of our future fellowship with the triune God to which those who have been reborn out of water and the Spirit have been called. It is the focal point of church life. Its sequence unfolds in a mandatory order from the opening hymn up to the closing hymn in accordance with the bindingly defined liturgy. Random differences in the execution of the divine services are thereby avoided, and the unity of the Church is reinforced and brought to awareness.

The following explanations concerning the liturgy<sup>32</sup> are intended to deepen understanding of the divine service experience.

### 4.2 General regulations

In the divine service, believers seek an encounter with God in the congregation. It is here that God's word and forgiveness of sins are proclaimed, sacraments are dispensed, and divine blessing is imparted.

It is the duty of all ministers to ensure that God can be experienced in His holiness in every divine service. It is the particular task of the Deacon ministry to attend to the external order required for an untroubled divine service experience.

The ministers who serve at the altar perform a task by way of which the believing congregation is to experience the activity of God. This demanding task requires intensive preparation, sanctification, and an appropriate demeanour both in terms of outward appearance and conduct, as well as in preaching.

#### 4.2.1 Preparing the divine service space

The congregational rector ensures that the divine service space is conscientiously prepared. This includes placing the Bible on the altar, setting up and filling the communion chalices, and setting out the locked offering boxes.

#### 4.2.2 Scheduling for divine services

The priestly ministers conduct divine services by commission of the Apostle and are scheduled for this purpose in accordance with the local rules.

#### 4.2.3 Greeting and farewell

All participants in the divine service are to feel welcome. Beyond that, it should be considered that they all come to the divine service from different situations of life. Ministers should have an idea of the particular concerns and cares of those who attend the divine service, empathise with them, and sensitively attune their conduct accordingly. If needed, they are available to talk to and offer to make themselves available for a meeting.

The farewell is to take place in a loving and friendly manner.

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<sup>32</sup> Chapter 4.5.2

#### 4.2.4 Transmission of divine services

It is up to the District Apostle to decide whether divine services are to be transmitted or not.

In the event that a transmission fails or simply does not occur, it is always necessary to choose a local officiant. If the transmission fails after the sermon at the transmitting site, the officiant at the receiving site will—after a brief wait—transition to the forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion, before concluding the divine service with a prayer and the benediction.

During the transmission service, all holy acts are performed at the altar in the congregation from which the divine service originates. In the receiving congregation, the altar remains unoccupied, even during the consecration of Holy Communion. The Holy Communion vessels in the receiving sites are opened and closed in parallel to those of the transmitting congregation.

#### 4.3 Spiritual preparation

Every divine service requires the ministers to diligently prepare themselves in a spiritual respect. The aim of this preparation is that God may reveal Himself to the congregation through the Holy Spirit, such that the believers may make an experience with God. A significant part of the divine service is an unscripted sermon, through which the timely will of God is proclaimed. This serves to prepare the bride of Christ by reinforcing the believers' love for God and their neighbour, as well as strengthening their joy in the gospel.

Before a divine service, ministers are to occupy themselves with the Bible, the *Divine Service Guide* article for the service, and the doctrinal statements in the Catechism as necessary. The emphasis of this spiritual preparation consists of properly understanding the Bible text and the *Divine Service Guide* article for the service, and of grasping the core message that is to be imparted.

Prayer and an intimate connection to the apostolate are indispensable for spiritual preparation. It is also advisable that ministers attune themselves to the circumstances and emotional state of the congregation. In this way, that which God wishes to tell the congregation can be awakened by the Holy Spirit in the divine service.

On the one hand, the ministers can be aware of their divine mission and rely on God's activity in the divine service. On the other hand, however, they must also humbly acknowledge that they cannot fulfil their service to the congregation without God or their connection to the apostolate.

In order to live up to the high standard of proclaiming the word of God, ministers must sanctify themselves and make the endeavour to free themselves from the stresses of daily life.

Ministers should utilise the time directly preceding the divine service in order to gather themselves and avoid disruptive influences. In a collective prayer with the other ministers, the officiant then commends him- or herself to God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

## 4.4 Length of divine services

The divine service should last:

- Sunday and church holy days 60 minutes
- Midweek 45 minutes

In the case of festive divine services or divine services with sacramental acts or acts of blessing, an appropriate lengthening of the service is also possible.

## 4.5 Liturgy

The liturgy specifies the defined framework in which all activities in the divine services are to unfold in a uniform and dignified manner. The repeated components in the sequence of a divine service are intended, among other things, to demonstrate God's consistent care to mankind. In this way, those who attend the divine service can feel secure in the unchanging faithfulness of God. In addition, the liturgy provides the officiating minister with security for their actions.

In the New Apostolic Church there are two forms of divine service, namely the regular divine service incorporating the dispensation of the sacraments and the word service, which does not include the dispensation of the sacraments.

The liturgy is binding. The wording of the following liturgical texts that appear in *italics* cannot be changed. They can be spoken with eyes open.

### 4.5.1 The liturgy of the divine service (short version)

#### I Beginning of the divine service

Opening hymn

Commencement in the triune name of God:

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

Opening prayer

Reading of the Bible text

Musical contribution

Reading of passage from the Bible<sup>33</sup> (as specified)

Recommended introductory words:

"We shall now hear a Bible passage taken from..."

Musical contribution after the Bible reading (optional)

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<sup>33</sup> If there is a reading from the Catechism, this will be mentioned accordingly.

## II Sermon part

Sermon

Musical contribution when calling ministers to assist

Assisting ministers

Musical contribution following the sermon part (optional)

## III Sacramental part

Preparation of congregation for forgiveness of sins and celebration of the sacraments.

Should there be further sacraments to be dispensed before Holy Communion (Holy Baptism with water and/or Holy Sealing) and/or acts of blessing to be performed (adoption or confirmation), the officiant is to prepare the congregation also for these.

Hymn of repentance or a moment of silence

Lord's Prayer

Recommended introductory words:

"Let us rise and join in the prayer which the Lord Jesus taught us."

Absolution:

*"In the commission of my sender, the Apostle (for Apostles: I now proclaim the glad...) I proclaim unto you the glad tidings: in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, your sins are forgiven. The peace of the Risen One be with you! Amen."*

Eucharistic prayer

Further sacraments and acts

- Holy Baptism with water
- Holy Sealing
- Adoption or confirmation

Introduction to Holy Communion

Recommended invitation:

"And now we shall celebrate Holy Communion."

Uncovering of the communion chalices

Recommended words following uncovering of the chalices:

"And now the Lord's table is prepared."

Consecration of Communion elements with gesture:

*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I consecrate bread and wine for Holy Communion, and lay thereupon the once brought, eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ. For the Lord took bread and wine, gave thanks, and said: This is My body which is broken for you. This is My blood of the new covenant given for many for the remission of sins. Eat and drink! Do this in remembrance of Me. For as often as you eat this bread and drink this wine, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes. Amen!”*

The officiant takes the consecrated host. Thereafter, other ministers receive Holy Communion.

Announcement of musical contributions during celebration of Holy Communion

Invitation to Holy Communion

Recommended introductory words:

“The Lord now invites you to Holy Communion.”

When non-New Apostolic Christians are invited to Holy Communion, this can occur with the following words:

“Invited are all baptised souls who profess Jesus Christ as Lord, as well as His death, His resurrection, and His return.”

Handing out the communion chalices

Serving of Holy Communion:

“The body and blood of Jesus given for you!”

or

“The body and blood of Jesus given for you and your child!”

(For adults with small children who cannot take the wafer for themselves).

Holy Communion for the departed and possibly other sacraments for the departed

Replacement of lids on communion chalices

#### IV Further acts

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

## V End of divine service

### Closing prayer

Benediction (with gesture of blessing):

*“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all! Amen.”*

(2 Corinthians 13: 14)

### Final musical contribution

The parts of the liturgy referenced above apply to a regular divine service.

Word services can also be held. These are divine services without the celebration of Holy Communion or any further sacramental acts. A word service usually comprises the beginning, the sermon part, and end.

A further special use of word services is described under 4.6.2: a word service with the dispensation of Holy Communion is possible if there is no priestly ministry available for an extended period of time.

If a priestly ministry is not available, a word service can also be held by Deacons.

A word service can also be used to serve particular groups of members if it takes place outside the regular divine service. For example, services for seniors or wedding services can be carried out as a word service.

If acts of blessing take place in a word service, they are performed by priestly ministers or Apostles.

## 4.5.2 Explanations on the liturgy

### 4.5.2.1 Before the divine service

The time prior to the divine service should have a preparatory character and serve for the personal sanctification.

- Greeting of members
- Time for a personal prayer
- Musical contributions
- Greeting on special occasion (for example, greeting of bridal couple in sacristy)
- Silence in the congregation (approximately three minutes before beginning of service)
- Sanctification and prayer of ministers (in the sacristy, possibly in the presence of the Deacons)

### 4.5.2.2 Opening hymn

The opening hymn is a collective expression of praise to God. It binds the believers together.

During the opening hymn the ministers who have taken their place at the altar say a silent prayer.

#### **4.5.2.3 Commencement in the triune name of God**

The commencement in the triune name of God in a divine service is as follows:

*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”*

This is the invocation (proclamation) of the triune God and the assurance of His presence.

In awareness of this holy moment, the officiant speaks these words in a clear and accentuated manner.

Since the commencement in the triune name of God is not part of the opening prayer, the eyes of the officiant can remain open.

A pause in speaking is inserted between the triune name of God and the subsequent opening prayer.

#### **4.5.2.4 Opening prayer**

The officiant prays with the congregation and speaks on its behalf.

The prayer should be concise and dignified. The prayer is not the time to start the sermon or try to explain something to God.

The prayer should be spoken loudly and clearly. It should take approximately three to four minutes.

Contents of the prayer might include:

- worship and praise of God
- gratitude for the presence of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit
- gratitude for His preservation, help, and grace
- the plea for divine peace
- gratitude for the hope of Christ’s return and the ability to prepare for it
- the plea for forgiveness and reconciliation with God and with one another
- the plea for God’s word to strengthen faith, bring comfort, and provide orientation for all those present, and for the proper understanding of the word
- intercession for members who cannot be present
- the plea for a connection to the apostolate
- the plea for a connection with one another and the departed
- the plea for sanctification and angel protection

If appropriate, significant events (for example, catastrophes) can be referenced in intercession.

#### **4.5.2.5 Reading of Bible text**

The officiant reads the Bible text with expression and dignity and without haste. Accentuated pronunciation helps direct the congregation’s attention to the words of Holy Scripture.

The congregation sits down following the reading of the Bible text.

#### **4.5.2.6 Musical contribution**

Following the reading of the Bible text there is a musical contribution that can be either choral or instrumental (the participants rise for choral or congregational singing).

#### **4.5.2.7 Bible reading (as specified)**

A Bible reading serves to provide a better understanding of Christian holy days and the gospel.

This makes it clear that the Bible is the basis of our faith and the preaching of our Church.

The Bible reading is specified in the *Divine Service Guide*. It should be taken from the Bible translation used in the respective Regional Church.

The Bible reading should take place in front of or next to the altar, if possible from a lectern and from a printed copy of the Bible. The officiant remains standing at the altar during the Bible reading, while the congregation is seated.

If the officiant takes on the task of reading, he or she should read from the altar.

Those who undertake the Bible reading must prepare themselves for this task.

The Bible reading is announced by the officiant.

Recommended announcement of the Bible reading<sup>34</sup>:

“We will now hear a Bible reading.”

#### **4.5.2.8 Musical contribution following the Bible reading (optional)**

A musical contribution can follow the Bible reading.

#### **4.5.2.9 Sermon**

God’s word and will is proclaimed to the congregation in the divine service.

The word of God is, first and foremost, the content recorded in Holy Scripture. The sermon must be oriented to this. The foundation of the sermon is thus a previously selected Bible text. The Chief Apostle provides the ministers with notes for interpretation of this passage (*Divine Service Guide*) so that they can prepare themselves for the divine services.

The sermon delivered by the officiant is not to exceed a maximum duration of 15 to 20 minutes. The sermon is concluded with “Amen”. The congregation then responds with “Amen”.

#### **4.5.2.10 Musical contribution when calling assistant**

If possible, there should be a musical contribution after the main sermon when other ministers are called to assist.

#### **4.5.2.11 Assisting ministers**

Assisting ministers should not serve for more than 5 minutes each. These contributions to the sermon are completed by “Amen”. In each case, the congregation responds with “Amen”.

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<sup>34</sup> If there is a reading from the Catechism, this must be explicitly mentioned.

#### **4.5.2.12 Musical contribution following the sermon part (optional)**

The sermon part can be concluded with a musical contribution.

#### **4.5.2.13 Preparing the congregation for forgiveness of sins and the celebration of Holy Communion**

Following the sermon, the congregation is prepared for the forgiveness of sins (absolution) and the celebration of Holy Communion.

The fact that forgiveness of sins is even possible is only thanks to the grace of God. His love for sinful mankind is demonstrated in the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ and the latter's death on the cross. This perfect, eternally valid sacrifice is the foundation for the forgiveness of sins.

The forgiveness of sins (absolution) is not a sacrament, but it is a prerequisite for receiving the sacraments worthily.

The subsequent celebration of Holy Communion guarantees fellowship of life with Jesus Christ.

The content of the preparation may include the following points:

- the instruction to repent
- a reminder of Jesus' washing of the disciples' feet (self-abasement)
- acknowledgement of personal sinfulness and guilt
- willingness to forgive and reconcile
- gratitude for Christ's sacrifice
- envisioning of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- remembrance of Jesus' suffering and death
- remembrance of the initiation of Holy Communion
- reminder that the proper administration of the sacraments has been entrusted to the Apostle ministry

A distinction must be made between forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion. They relate to each other insofar that the forgiveness of sins provides the holiness required in order to receive the sacraments, and thus to worthily partake of the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The subsequent celebration of Holy Communion guarantees fellowship of life with Jesus Christ.

#### **4.5.2.14 Hymn of repentance or a moment of silence**

Following these words of preparation for the forgiveness of sins and Holy Communion, the congregation sings the hymn of repentance.

The hymn of repentance is an expression of collective confession of sins before God and each other.

The congregation remains seated during the hymn of repentance. The choir stands if it is asked to sing.

In place of the hymn of repentance, the officiant may invite the congregation to observe a moment of silence (with a maximum duration of one minute). A moment of silence is a time of reflection and can help us experience God's nearness through repentance and remorse. The congregation remains seated for this.

#### **4.5.2.15 The Lord's Prayer**

The officiant invites the congregation to join in the Lord's Prayer. He can use words to the following effect:

"Let us rise and join in the prayer which the Lord Jesus taught us."

The congregation stands while praying the Lord's Prayer.

#### **4.5.2.16 Absolution**

The Lord's Prayer is followed by the absolution, which is formulated as follows:

*"In the commission of my sender, the Apostle, I proclaim unto you the glad tidings: in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, your sins are forgiven. The peace of the Risen One abide with you! Amen."*

This makes it clear that the priestly ministry has been authorised by the apostolate to proclaim the forgiveness of sins.

The absolution is not a prayer. It can be pronounced with eyes open. The text may be read aloud.

The congregation stands during the absolution. The members confirm their believing acceptance of this forgiveness and the peace of Jesus with "Amen".

#### **4.5.2.17 Eucharistic prayer**

The Eucharistic prayer includes praise and thanks for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. It serves as a reminder of the Lord's suffering and death. At the same time, it draws attention to the fact that Jesus Christ instituted the sacrament of Holy Communion in the circle of His Apostles.

The Eucharistic prayer can therefore include:

- gratitude for the grace bestowed in the forgiveness of sins
- gratitude for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ
- gratitude for the institution of Holy Communion by the Lord
- gratitude for the sending of the apostolate in the past and present
- the invocation of the Holy Spirit (epiclesis) who guarantees the presence of the body and blood of Jesus and helps us to receive the meal for salvation and strength.

The Eucharistic prayer is concluded with "Amen". The congregation reinforces this with "Amen".

#### **4.5.2.18 Further sacraments and acts**

The dispensation of sacraments and other acts of blessing, namely Holy Baptism with water, Holy Sealing, adoption, or confirmation, may follow the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, but occurs prior to the consecration of Holy Communion.

If several acts are planned, they are performed in the following order:

- Holy Baptism with water
- adoption
- Holy Sealing
- confirmation

These acts can be introduced and concluded with a musical selection.

The forgiveness of sins provides the sanctification required for receiving the sacraments and the aforementioned holy acts. The sacraments and acts also constitute a profession. This is associated with regular participation in Holy Communion.

After these acts, the believers involved receive Holy Communion together with the congregation. This expresses that they are now part of the congregation, and underlines the fellowship characteristic of Holy Communion. The ministers and the congregation together comprise this fellowship of Holy Communion.

#### **4.5.2.19 Introduction to Holy Communion**

Following the Eucharistic prayer and the dispensation of sacraments and other holy acts, if applicable, the officiant returns to his or her place behind the altar and introduces Holy Communion.

Recommended introduction to Holy Communion:

“And now we shall celebrate Holy Communion.”

#### **4.5.2.20 Uncovering the communion chalices**

The invitation to the celebration of Holy Communion is followed by moments of silence.

The chalices are uncovered in silence.

The chalices are not usually uncovered by the officiant. If no other priestly ministers are present, this liturgical event can be performed by Deacons.

The question of who should uncover the chalices and who should be assigned to serve Holy Communion should be settled before the service.

Once the ministers have uncovered the communion chalices and have returned to their seats, the officiant subsequently announces the beginning of the consecration of the sacramental elements to the congregation with the following recommended wording:

“And now the Lord’s table is prepared.”

#### **4.5.2.21 Consecration**

The bread and wine are not changed in their substance when the words of institution are spoken in the consecration. Rather, the substance of Jesus’ body and blood are joined to them (consubstantiation).

In Holy Communion, the bread and wine correspond to the human nature of Christ, while the body and blood correspond to His divine nature.

Bread and wine are not metaphors or symbols for the body and blood of Christ. Rather, the body and blood of Christ are truly present (real presence).

The sacrifice of Jesus Christ on Golgotha is also present in Holy Communion. So it is that each celebration of Holy Communion allows the participants to envision the sacrificial death of the Lord, such that they can proclaim it with conviction.

During the consecration of the elements, the officiant extends his or her arms, pointing to the chalices with his or her hands. If the chalices are only on one side of the altar, both arms can point in this direction.

The consecration can be spoken with open eyes. Reading of the consecration text is permissible.



Photo 6: Consecration of Holy Communion



Photo 7: Consecration of Holy Communion

### Consecration formula

<b>In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,</b>	<i>Beginning of sacrament in the triune name of God</i>
<b>I consecrate</b>	<i>Act</i>
<b>bread and wine for Holy Communion,</b>	<i>Description of the natural elements, the means of the sacrament</i>
<b>and lay thereupon the once brought, eternally valid sacrifice of Jesus Christ.</b>	<i>Envisioning of Christ's sacrifice in the present and the joining of the body and blood of Jesus Christ (consubstantiation)</i>
<b>For the Lord</b>	<i>Remembrance of the event</i>
<b>took bread and wine,</b>	<i>Reference to natural elements</i>
<b>gave thanks and said:</b>	<i>Thanks to God</i>
<b>"This is My body which is broken for you.</b>	<i>Participation in the life of Christ</i>

<b>This is My blood of the new covenant,</b>	<i>Presence of Christ's sacrifice</i>
<b>given for many for the remission of sins.</b>	<i>Reference to Christ's sacrifice as the basis for the forgiveness of sins</i>
<b>Eat and drink!</b>	<i>Invitation to partake of Christ's body and blood--believers receive the Lord Himself in Holy Communion. (Act is remembrance of Christ and the supper instituted by Him)</i>
<b>Do this in remembrance of Me."</b>	<i>Meal of remembrance: remembrance of Jesus' sacrificial death and the institution of Holy Communion in the circle of the Apostles, as well as the promise of His return</i>
<b>For as often as you eat this bread and drink this wine,</b>	<i>Meal of fellowship that takes place repeatedly</i>
<b>you proclaim the Lord's death</b>	<i>Meal of profession</i>
<b>till He comes.</b>	<i>Eschatological meal</i>
<b>Amen!</b>	<i>Confirmation of that which was previously said.</i>

The consecration formula covers all fundamental aspects of Holy Communion, namely:

- **meal of commemoration**—remembrance of the institution of Holy Communion and the sacrificial death of Christ, as well as His promise to return
- **meal of profession**—that is, the profession of the Lord's sacrificial death, resurrection, and return
- **meal of fellowship**—fellowship of Jesus with His Apostles, Jesus' fellowship with the congregation, and fellowship of the members with one another
- **eschatological meal**—anticipation of fellowship with Jesus Christ in the marriage in heaven.
- **presence of Christ's sacrifice**—the events of Golgotha are envisioned in the present
- **presence of Christ's body and blood**—the glorified body of the Lord is truly present

#### 4.5.2.22 Holy Communion for the ministers

The officiant picks up a chalice and serves him- or herself Holy Communion.



*Photo 8: The officiant takes Holy Communion*

The congregation remains standing until the ministers at the altar have received Holy Communion from the officiant. This also applies to those ministers who are not seated there. This can be accompanied by a musical contribution.

#### 4.5.2.23 Announcement of musical contributions for the celebration of Holy Communion

Once the officiant has returned to the altar and replaced the communion chalice, the congregation sits down. The officiant then announces the musical contributions to be sung during the celebration of Holy Communion.

#### 4.5.2.24 Invitation to Holy Communion

The congregation is invited with words to the following effect:

“The Lord now invites you to Holy Communion.”

The officiant then hands the communion chalices to the Priests who are to dispense Holy Communion.

Following the distribution of the chalices, the musical contribution can begin. It can also take place after the congregation has received Holy Communion.

In festive divine services with many participants, the distribution of communion chalices can be handled differently, for example, with musical accompaniment.

If applicable, this can be followed in special divine services by an invitation to guests who wish to participate in Holy Communion. The following words can be used to invite them:

“Invited are all baptised souls who confess Jesus Christ as Lord, as well as His death, His resurrection, and His return.”

Those regularly authorised to participate include sealed members, adopted members, and those who have received the New Apostolic baptism. Duly baptised guests (that is, those baptised with water and in the triune name of God) are permitted to participate. Those who have not been baptised should not receive Holy Communion. However, no one should be prevented from participating.

#### 4.5.2.25 Handing out the communion chalices

The inner composure of the ministers with regard to Holy Communion should also be reflected in their outward posture. This also applies to the dignified handling of the communion chalices.



*Photo 9: The appropriate way to hold a chalice*



*Photo 10: The appropriate way to hand over a chalice*



*Photo 11: The appropriate way to hold a paten*



*Photo 12: The appropriate way to hand over a paten*

#### 4.5.2.26 Serving of Holy Communion

The wafers are served with the words:

*“The body and blood of Jesus given for you!”*

Adults with small children who cannot take the wafer for themselves are served with the words:

*“The body and blood of Jesus given for you and your child!”*

The wafer should be served in an accentuated manner.

The serving of the body and blood of Christ must never be rushed. When serving Holy Communion anything that could disturb the recipient in his or her devotion, or that might impede the holiness of the sacrament, must be avoided.



*Photo 13: Serving the wafer*

The altar should remain occupied by a minister during the celebration of Holy Communion.

The dispensation of Holy Communion is only complete once all those who have a longing have received the holy meal.

#### 4.5.2.27 Replacing the lids on the communion chalices

The communion lids are only replaced once all the participants have returned to their seats and all musical contributions during the celebration of Holy Communion have been completed. As a rule, the same ministers who uncovered the chalices should also cover them again. If Holy Communion for the departed is also to be celebrated, the chalices present on the altar remain open until the end of this sacramental act.

#### 4.5.2.28 Further acts and completion of divine service

On Sundays and church holy days<sup>35</sup>, the apostolate dispenses Holy Communion and possibly also the other sacraments to the departed. These acts are commenced and concluded with a musical contribution. The chalices are only covered again once the last musical contribution has been completed. The congregation remains standing.

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<sup>35</sup> CNAC 12.5

If applicable, this is followed by:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

A musical piece may also be performed. The congregation is seated in this case.

#### 4.5.2.29 Closing prayer

Recommended introduction:

“Let us rise for the closing prayer and the benediction.”

The final prayer is to be short and can include the following points:

- gratitude for God’s word and grace
- the plea for God’s protection, help, and accompanying presence
- intercession for the needy, the sick, the oppressed, and persecuted
- intercession for those who bear responsibility in state and society
- the plea for blessing of the material offerings, of everything done for the Lord and in His work of redemption, and of those who have brought these offerings and sacrifices
- the plea for the gathering, preparation, and perfection of the bridal congregation
- the plea for the imminent return of Christ

The closing prayer is completed by a single “Amen”.

#### 4.5.2.30 The benediction

The closing prayer is followed by a separate liturgical part: the benediction. The wording is:

*“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all! Amen.”<sup>36</sup>*

The benediction is dispensed with extended arms (in a gesture of blessing). The palms should point toward the congregation.



*Photo 14: Gesture when bestowing the benediction*

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<sup>36</sup> 2 Corinthians 13: 14

The benediction is followed by the threefold “Amen” as a liturgical song by the congregation.

Following this, the officiant closes the Bible.

#### **4.5.2.31 Final musical contribution**

The benediction is followed by a musical contribution.

### **4.5.3 Additional liturgical regulations**

#### **4.5.3.1 Youth services**

In divine services for the youth, a participant can read out an excerpt from the Bible or the *Catechism of the New Apostolic Church*, which are specified in the corresponding *Divine Service Guide* article.

Before or after a youth service, young people may say a prayer or relate an experience. This must be co-ordinated ahead of time with all those involved.

#### **4.5.3.2 Divine services with a Bible study theme**

In divine services based on a Bible study theme, suitable Bible excerpts can be read aloud, as specified in the *Divine Service Guide* article for that divine service.

#### **4.5.3.3 Children’s services**

In divine services for children, the officiant can involve the children through questions and answers during the sermon portion, and even leave the altar space for this purpose. The District Apostles can decide on further deviations from the usual liturgy in children’s services, for example, the inclusion of visual elements or scenic representations.

### **4.5.4 Requirements of the sermon**

The preaching of the word in the divine services is of great significance. Joy in response to the resurrection of Jesus and the gospel, as well as love for God and one’s neighbour should always stand in the foreground. It should be possible for the participants in the divine service to implement specific references from the sermon in their daily lives.

In the divine service, ministers should serve in humbleness, and to the glory and praise of God, all the while using appropriate facial expressions, gestures, vocabulary, and modes of expression. The activity of the Holy Spirit is to be tangible and perceptible.

Sermons with a recognisable structure—which includes an introduction, main portion, and conclusion, as well as a possible summary—facilitate attentive listening. The introduction is to make listeners feel accepted and welcome. The main portion serves to interpret the Bible text. In the process, the message of the divine service must be clearly recognisable. At the end of the sermon, the officiant may summarise the key contents.

## **4.6 Special types of divine services**

### **4.6.1 Word service**

The word service focuses on the preaching of the word. No sacraments are dispensed in a word service.

Word services are intended to serve or provide pastoral care to certain circles or for special occasions.

If a priestly minister is unavailable for regular divine services, Deacons can conduct word services within the scope of their authority to conduct word services (including the dispensation of the Trinitarian benediction). Prior consultation with the Apostle is required.

In the event that the priestly minister who has been scheduled to conduct the divine service fails to arrive, a Deacon should conduct a word service.

Apostles and priestly ministers can perform acts of blessing in a word service. Although a Deacon can dispense the benediction, he or she does not perform any further acts of blessing such as a wedding, for example.

In a word service there are no communion chalices on the altar. The officiant assumes his or her position behind the altar during the opening hymn.

A word service has the following sequence:

- opening hymn
- Trinitarian formula
- opening prayer
- reading of the Bible text
- musical contribution
- sermon based on the *Divine Service Guide*
- musical contribution when calling ministers to assist
- assisting ministers (optional)
- musical contribution following the sermon part (optional)
- introductory words prior to the Lord's Prayer
- collectively spoken Lord's Prayer
- closing prayer
- Trinitarian benediction
- threefold Amen sung by congregation
- final musical contribution (optional)

A word service should not last longer than 45 minutes.

#### **4.6.2 Word service in which Holy Communion can be taken**

If it can be expected that divine services with dispensation of sacraments will not take place over a longer period, and that only word services can be held by a Deacon, there is an opportunity for Holy Communion to be taken at appropriate intervals. Since a priestly minister is not present, members can only receive and partake of previously consecrated communion wafers. Further information can be found under "Prayer service in which Holy Communion can be taken".<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Chapter 5.1

### **4.6.3 Divine service for the departed**

#### **4.6.3.1 Divine service for the departed with prayer of intercession**

The sequence of a divine service for the departed corresponds to that of a divine service with dispensation of the sacraments (regular divine service).<sup>38</sup> When a divine service for the departed takes place that only incorporates a prayer of intercession, the congregation is prepared for this prayer of intercession by way of a brief address following the celebration of Holy Communion.

This prayer of intercession can have the following content:

##### **gratitude that**

- through Jesus' sacrifice, even unredeemed souls in the beyond can receive salvation
- access to the kingdom of God and eternal life is also open to them when they receive the sacraments,
- the souls have fellowship with Jesus Christ, their Lord and Saviour.

##### **intercession for unredeemed souls**

- that they may believe in Jesus Christ and accept the gospel, and that they may recognise the significance of the Apostle ministry
- that they may receive the strength to approach Jesus Christ with trust and humbleness,
- that they may have a longing for God's mercy and the sacraments,
- that God may grant them His love and care, and that they may receive salvation from Jesus Christ.

The intercessory prayer is introduced and concluded with a musical contribution.

Sequence in the divine service for the departed with prayer of intercession:

- If there is only a prayer of intercession in the divine service for the departed, the congregation remains seated during the introductory address and the introductory musical contribution. The congregation rises for the prayer of intercession and also remains standing for the concluding musical contribution.
- The musical contributions have a comprehensible spiritual relationship to the events.

After the prayer of intercession, other acts may be performed or—as a rule—this is followed directly by the closing prayer and final benediction.

#### **4.6.3.2 Divine service for the departed with dispensation of the sacraments**

The proper administration of the sacraments is incumbent on the apostolate. The sacraments are dispensed to both the living and the dead. As a rule, the Chief Apostle and the District Apostles perform these acts.

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<sup>38</sup> Chapter 4.5.1

Sequence in the divine service for the departed with dispensation of the sacraments:

- The sacraments are dispensed to the departed following the celebration of Holy Communion with the congregation. The communion chalices on the altar remain uncovered until this dispensation of sacraments to the departed is complete.
- The dispensation of the sacraments is introduced and concluded with musical contributions. The two ministers who receive the sacraments as proxies for the departed souls come to the altar before the introductory musical contribution and remain standing with the officiant until the end of the concluding musical contribution
- Following the musical contribution and the introductory words of the officiant, the congregation is asked to rise for the subsequent dispensation of the sacraments of Holy Baptism, Holy Sealing, and Holy Communion. The officiant performs the respective sacramental acts one after the other.
- The congregation rises immediately before the sacramental acts for the departed are performed and remains standing during the concluding musical contribution.
- Both the introductory and closing musical contributions have a comprehensible spiritual relationship to the events.

After the dispensation of the sacraments for the departed, additional acts may follow, or—as a rule—the officiant proceeds directly to the closing prayer and benediction.

#### **4.6.4 Dedication service**

##### **4.6.4.1 Divine service with dedication of a church building or divine service premises**

Premises and buildings in which regular divine services take place are dedicated. The dedication can also take place outside of the regularly scheduled divine service times. It is an act of blessing and is usually conducted by the responsible Apostle. The Apostle may also delegate the dedication to ministers who carry a priestly ministry.

The sequence of a dedication service follows the liturgy of a regular divine service, and therefore includes the celebration of Holy Communion. The actual act of dedication takes place before the sermon. It consists of a blessing and a prayer.

The dedication service has the following **sequence**:

- Trinitarian formula
- opening prayer
- reading of Bible text
- musical contribution
- introductory words of the officiant
- act of dedication. The congregation is asked to rise. The officiant pronounces the following words with the gesture of blessing (extended arms as during the benediction):  
*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I dedicate this place as a house of God. Amen.”*

The dedication prayer can include the following content:

- This place is dedicated as a place of worship and of encounter with the triune God.
- May the peace of Christ be felt in this place.
- May the love and grace of Christ be experienced here.
- The proper administration of the sacraments occurs here.
- May the activity of the Holy Spirit be experienced here.
- This is the place where the apostolate prepares for the return of Christ.
- May the triune God grant this place, the congregation, and all who come and go in this place His protection and blessing!

The prayer is concluded with “Amen”. This is then followed by

- a musical contribution
- possibly a Bible reading (if the dedication takes place on a Christian holy day)
- the remaining divine service liturgy, including the dispensation of sacraments

#### **4.6.4.2 Ceremonial act supplementary to the dedication**

A separate ceremonial act can be held before or after the dedication service. The address by the officiant can be followed by further contributions, for example, by the architect, ministers from other churches, or local officials. All official speeches are made in front of the altar or beside it from a lectern. As a rule, the ceremonial act is accompanied by musical contributions.

If a separate ceremonial act is not planned, official speeches can be carried out in the same manner in the dedication service following the benediction.

#### **4.6.5 Decommissioning service**

Dedicated churches and places of worship which are no longer in use are decommissioned. Once it has been decommissioned, the site becomes a regular building that can be assigned to a different purpose.

#### **Divine service to decommission a church or a place of worship**

Decommissioning takes place during a divine service with the dispensation of sacraments. This final divine service should normally be conducted by the Apostle. The Apostle can delegate the decommissioning to other ministers with a priestly ministry.

As a rule, this divine service includes a look back. Content from the congregational chronicles can be read out.

In conclusion, gratitude is expressed to all those who have participated in church life. If the decommissioning of the congregation is associated with an amalgamation into another congregation, the reinstatement of ministers can also take place in this divine service.

The closing prayer of the decommissioning service should include the following points:

- thanks that the congregation was able to gather in this building, and that it was always a place of refuge from everyday cares and burdens
- gratitude that the presence of the triune God was felt here in word, sacrament, and blessing
- the plea that the faith of the congregation's members may be strengthened and that they may remain protected in their new congregation or, if applicable, the plea for blessed congregational life in the new church building.

The closing prayer is concluded with "Amen".

This is followed by the decommissioning with the following words:

*"In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I decommission this place of worship. Henceforth, it is no longer a place where the Holy Spirit is active. May the peace of God continue to guide the congregation on their way. Amen."*

The decommissioning is carried out without the gesture of blessing. This is directly followed by the benediction and the threefold "Amen".

If it is a regional custom, the ministers can carry the Bible (symbol of God's word) and the communion chalices (symbol of the sacraments) out of the decommissioned church following the final musical contribution.

#### **4.6.6 Wedding service**

Wedding services are separately scheduled word services incorporating an act of blessing, namely the dispensation of a wedding blessing. They are conducted by the Apostle or a priestly minister, and should take place in a church or other dignified place. The wedding service should not last longer than 45 minutes.

The entrance of the wedding couple can occur at the beginning of the wedding service. This can be accompanied by music, for which the congregation rises. Thereafter, the wedding service is celebrated in the following manner:

- opening hymn
- Trinitarian formula
- opening prayer
- reading of the Bible text
- musical contribution
- sermon
- musical contribution (optional)
- address to the bridal couple
- civil marriage, if applicable
- officiant's question to the bridal couple, or individual vows of the bridal couple
- exchange of rings (optional)
- dispensation of the wedding blessing
- conveyance of greeting or best wishes or a prayer by a minister from a different Christian denomination (optional)<sup>39</sup>
- musical contribution
- Lord's Prayer (optional)
- closing prayer
- benediction
- threefold "Amen"

The congregation rises and remains standing for the prayers, the officiant's question, the vows of the bridal couple, the exchange of rings, and the wedding blessing.

### **Officiant's question in the case of a civil marriage conducted by the Church**

If the civil marriage or traditional marriage is also performed by the Church, this takes place after the address of the officiant and before the wedding blessing. The couple give their marriage vows. The questions addressed to the bridal couple depend on the respective legal requirements. After the vows or the agreement of the bridal couple, the officiant declares them a lawfully married couple by virtue of his or her civil authority.

In terms of liturgy, the question to the bridal couple or the couple's exchange of vows is followed by the wedding blessing.

### **Questions addressed to the bridal couple prior to the wedding blessing**

Prior to the dispensation of the blessing, the officiant asks the bridal couple for their yes. The couple can be asked these questions individually or jointly, depending on regional custom. The questions asked of the bride and groom should have the following content.

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<sup>39</sup> Chapter 10.1.1.3

Is the bridegroom and is the bride willing to

- recognise the man at her side or the woman at his side as a gift of God,
- stand together in all circumstances and remain faithful to each other as long as they live,
- treat each other with love and esteem, and lead their lives together in accordance with the commandments of God?

Following their yes, the officiant dispenses the wedding blessing.

### Individual vows of the bridal couple prior to the wedding blessing

As an alternative to being asked for their yes by the officiant, the bridal couple may exchange vows prior to the blessing by repeating a text read to them by the officiant or by themselves. In so doing, the bridal couple face one another.

First, the bridegroom makes his vow as follows:

*“I, (name of the groom), recognise you, (name of the bride), as a gift from God and vow, before God and this congregation to love and remain faithful to you, for better or for worse. In our marriage, I will lead my life according to the commandments of God, look up to you with esteem, and support you as long as I shall live. So help me God! Amen.”*

This is followed by the corresponding vow by the bride:

*“I, (name of the bride), recognise you, (name of the groom), as a gift from God and vow, before God and this congregation to love and remain faithful to you, for better or for worse. In our marriage, I will lead my life according to the commandments of God, look up to you with esteem, and support you as long as I shall live. So help me God! Amen.”*

This is followed by the wedding blessing.

### Exchange of rings by the bridal couple

The bridal couple may wish to exchange rings in the wedding service. If the bridal couple so desires, the officiant asks them to exchange rings following their yes or their vows and before dispensing the wedding blessing. No words accompany the exchange of rings.

Depending on local tradition, the exchange of rings can also occur prior to the vows or the civil marriage.

Short prayer (optional)

### The wedding blessing

The officiant dispenses the wedding blessing by placing his or her hand on the extended right hands of the bridal couple and speaking words to the following effect:

“Receive the divine blessing for your matrimony in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”

The wedding blessing can also contain further wishes using the following approximate wording:

- May God, your Father and Creator, accompany you through life and grant you protection, sustenance, and assistance.
- May God the Son, who is your Redeemer, lead you to eternal life.
- May God the Holy Spirit guide you and grant you wisdom.
- May the triune God strengthen you in your love and loyalty to each other.
- The peace of the Risen One be with you!

The wedding blessing is concluded with “Amen”. The officiant then congratulates the couple.

At the request of couples belonging to different denominations, a member of the clergy of the denomination of the non-New Apostolic partner can speak some words of greeting, express his or her best wishes or say a prayer, and congratulate the couple. However, there is neither a collective dispensation of blessing nor an additional blessing. The address of the visiting clergy member takes place in front of the altar.<sup>40</sup>

The wedding service is concluded with a closing prayer, the benediction, and the threefold “Amen”.

A wider scope of music is possible for weddings. All musical contributions must, however, meet the criteria of a divine service event.

#### **4.6.7 Funeral service**

A funeral service is first and foremost a reference to the fact that God is the Lord over life and death. It serves to commemorate the departed individual and to comfort and strengthen the bereaved through the Holy Spirit.

Even when confronted with death and despair, we can recall the promise of the gospel that Jesus Christ is the life<sup>41</sup>.

Above all, our comfort lies in the hope of Christ’s return and the associated resurrection of the dead in Christ.<sup>42</sup>

The congregation assembled for the funeral surrounds the bereaved and imparts sympathy and security.

The funeral can take place at the cemetery, in one of our churches, at a funeral parlour, or—depending on regional custom—at the home of the family.

##### **4.6.7.1 Word service on the occasion of a funeral**

The sequence of the funeral service corresponds to that of a word service and is conducted by a priestly minister or an Apostle. The sequence is the same for all types of burial. The service can take place directly with the interment or on a separate occasion.

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<sup>40</sup> Chapter 10.1.1.3

<sup>41</sup> John 14: 19

<sup>42</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4: 13–18

In addition to the interpretation of the Bible text, the sermon can also include references to the life of the deceased, or a short curriculum vitae of the deceased can be read.

The surrendering of the body and the blessing take place following the sermon portion. As a rule, both should take place at the interment because the words with which the body is surrendered are accompanied by a corresponding act (gesture of blessing).

If the interment takes place without a minister, the surrendering of the body and the blessing take place during the funeral service.

#### **4.6.7.2 Surrendering of the body and funeral blessing**

For all types of burial, the liturgical text for the surrendering of the body is as follows:

*“I now return the transitory body to the earth with the words: ‘Earth to earth, dust to dust, ashes to ashes.’ Soul and spirit, however, I commend to the love of Jesus Christ who shall guard over it until the resurrection to eternal life.”*

The blessing is administered directly thereafter with the gesture of blessing, that is, with extended arms:

*“The Lord shall preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth, and even forevermore. Amen.”<sup>43</sup>*

Following this, the congregation can join in the Lord's Prayer. This is followed by the closing prayer and benediction. The funeral service itself is concluded with the threefold “Amen” sung by the congregation.

For the prayers and the surrendering of the body the congregation stands. For the congregational singing it follows the officiant's lead.

Eulogies, which are common in certain regions, can be incorporated into the funeral service, preferably following the benediction.

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<sup>43</sup> Psalm 121: 8

**Sequence** of the funeral service as an overview:

- musical contribution (optional)
- Trinitarian formula
- opening prayer
- reading of the Bible text
- musical contribution (optional)
- sermon/reading of the curriculum vitae (optional)
- musical contribution when another minister is called to assist (optional)
- other ministers called to assist
- possible surrendering of the body
- possible funeral blessing
- Lord's Prayer (optional)
- musical contribution or moments of silence (optional)
- closing prayer
- benediction
- congregation sings the threefold "Amen"
- musical contribution (optional)
- eulogies (optional)
- concluding musical contribution (optional)

### Interment at a later point in time

The interment at the cemetery has the following **sequence** (identical for burials, cremations, or burials at sea):

- musical contribution (optional)
- Trinitarian formula
- opening prayer
- musical contribution (optional)
- short address
- surrendering of the body
- blessing
- Lord's Prayer (optional)
- closing prayer
- benediction
- eulogies (optional)
- concluding musical contribution (optional)

The address to the mourners can have the following contents: shelter and security in God's grace, Christ's return, resurrection of the dead, reunion, eternal life.

Depending on local tradition, the Lord's Prayer can also be said at a different point during the funeral service or interment.

The involvement of clergy from other denominations in funeral services is regulated by chapter 10.1.1.5.

## **4.7 Dispensation of sacraments and acts of blessing outside of the divine service**

### **4.7.1 Dispensation of sacraments**

In special cases, sacraments can also be received outside of the public divine services (for example, in hospitals, nursing homes, at home, and so on).

This celebration of the sacraments is performed in accordance with the divine service liturgy,

If sacraments are desired in a hospital or nursing home, for example, it must be ensured that they can be performed in a dignified manner.

### **4.7.2 Acts of blessing**

Acts of blessing may also be received outside of the public divine services (for example in hospitals, nursing homes, at home, etc.). The details are regulated by the Regional Church.

The dispensation of the prenatal blessing as the first visible act of God upon a human being is usually performed in the context of a pastoral care visit (see Chapter 6.8.1).

The act of blessing (for example, a wedding anniversary blessing) takes place after the address, the Trinitarian formula, and the opening prayer, which is concluded with "Amen". The celebration is concluded with prayer and blessing.

The liturgy corresponds to that of a word service (Chapter 4.6.1).

## **5 Prayer service with and without liturgical form**

### **5.1 Prayer service with liturgical form**

#### **5.1.1 Liturgical celebration led by non-ordained members**

Where divine services can only take place sporadically or when, for a longer period of time, no priestly minister is available to conduct divine services, this can be compensated by word services conducted by Deacons in consultation with the apostolate (see “Word service”, Chapter 4.6.1).

However, if there are no ministers available at all, non-ordained members may conduct prayer services that follow a fixed liturgical form. These prayer services are intended to ensure that members of a congregation do not suffer through the absence of spiritual care and fellowship. For this reason, prayer services should preferably take place in the location where divine services are usually conducted.

A prayer service differs from other devotionals which are conducted by ministers or laypersons on special occasions and have no fixed form (see “Devotionals”, Chapter 9.1).

If it is necessary to conduct prayer services, the Apostle or a minister designated by him or her for this purpose can authorise a member of the congregation to perform this task. This can be done, for example, in a divine service, by phone, or by letter.

Just like a divine service, a prayer service is open to all.

#### **5.1.2 Form of a prayer service**

If an altar is present in the place of worship, it should be prepared as for a word service, that is, without communion chalices.

The person conducting the prayer service stands or sits in front of the altar (if present) throughout the entire prayer service. If only a few people are present, chairs can be arranged in a circle for the prayer service. All participants stand for prayers and hymns.

#### **5.1.3 Beginning of a prayer service**

If possible, the group should sing a hymn together. The prayer service does not start with the Trinitarian formula, because this is not a divine service. The prayer service begins with a prayer.

This can include:

- praise and glorification of God
- thanks for the protection, help, and grace He has bestowed
- the plea for divine peace
- the plea for the strengthening of fellowship
- the plea for connection to the Apostle ministry
- intercession for brothers and sisters who cannot be present

A further musical contribution can then follow. This is followed by the reading of a Bible text in accordance with specifications.

This is then followed by the reading of a text which the Apostle has provided. The reading of this text does not conclude with “Amen”. If references to biblical texts are included, these can also be read aloud from Holy Scripture.

Musical contributions can enrich the prayer service.

As part of the prayer service, participants can be given the opportunity to express their feelings and thoughts in response to the text that was read.

#### **5.1.4 Conclusion of a prayer service**

The Lord’s Prayer is spoken collectively at the end of the prayer service. The prayer service is concluded with a freely spoken prayer.

This prayer can have the following content:

- thanks for word and fellowship
- intercession for congregational members, for the needy, the sick, the oppressed, and persecuted
- the plea for blessing upon the offerings that have been brought
- the plea for God’s blessing, protection, and peace, for His help and accompanying presence.
- the plea for the imminent return of Christ
- the plea to be accepted upon Christ’s return

#### **5.2 Prayer service in which Holy Communion can be taken**

If it can be expected that divine services will not take place over a longer period, and that only word services or prayer services can be held, the Apostle can rule that the participants at prayer services can take Holy Communion at appropriate intervals. This applies if there are no other possibilities for the celebration of New Apostolic Holy Communion.

Such prayer services in which Holy Communion can be taken are conducted based on the practice of pastoral care letters containing consecrated wafers, which are sent out to members by the District Apostle in defined individual cases.

The congregation gathered for the prayer service receives a pastoral care letter with consecrated wafers. The wafers from the pastoral care letter are poured into a suitable vessel or communion chalice, which is placed on the altar or a table for this purpose.

Procedure for taking Holy Communion in the prayer service:

- After the congregation has prayed the Lord’s Prayer together, the person conducting the prayer service reads the absolution from the pastoral care letter.
- The person conducting the prayer service opens the communion chalice containing the consecrated wafers from the pastoral care letter.
- Then he or she reads out the words in the pastoral care letter for taking the wafers: “The body and the blood of Jesus given for you.”
- Following this, each of the participants in the prayer service takes a wafer.

When Holy Communion is taken in a word service, the sequence is the same.

## **5.3 Devotional (without liturgical form)**

### **5.3.1 Occasional gathering without liturgical form**

In contrast to prayer services that have a firmly defined liturgical form, devotionals are occasional gatherings that do not have a liturgical form.

Possible occasions for devotionals might include church holy days or events in society, as well as memorial days or catastrophes. For example, devotionals can be held on Christmas Eve, Maundy Thursday (institution of Holy Communion), Good Friday (the hour of Jesus' death), or Ascension Day. Likewise, a devotional might take place prior to a divine service for the departed in order to commemorate the departed. Devotionals might also be held on the occasion of congregational anniversaries or in connection with other events of public relations work, missionary efforts, or fellowship with other Christian denominations. A devotional always has some kind of reference to the Christian faith.

#### **Sequence** of a devotional

A devotional has no liturgical form. Therefore it is not a special form of divine service either. The presence of ministers is not required to conduct a devotional. Its sequence is defined by the individual presiding over it.

A devotional is not conducted from the altar. In a devotional, there is no preaching of the word, dispensation of sacraments, or any act of blessing. A devotional begins and concludes with a prayer. It does not begin with an invocation of the Trinity, nor is the benediction spoken. There is no threefold "Amen".

The congregational rector decides on the celebration of devotionals in the church building. Their format must always be appropriate to the holiness of God's house.

## **6 Dispensation of sacraments and acts of blessing in the divine service**

### **6.1 Holy Baptism with water**

Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental sacramental act of grace of the triune God bestowed on a human being who believes in Jesus Christ. Through it original sin is washed away and the believer is led out of his position of remoteness from God.

Nevertheless, his inclination to sin (concupiscence) remains. Through Holy Baptism with water, the baptised shares in the merit Jesus Christ acquired for mankind through His sacrificial death. Thereby a human being is led into his or her first close relationship with God and becomes a Christian, and is therefore also incorporated into the church, that is, into the fellowship of those who believe in Jesus Christ and profess Him as their Lord.<sup>44</sup>

#### **6.1.1 Prerequisites**

Adults can receive Holy Baptism with water if they attend the divine services and profess the New Apostolic belief in

- the triune God
- the death, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ
- the effectiveness of the Apostle ministry in administering the sacraments, proclaiming the word, and preparing for the return of Jesus Christ to take home His bride.

Before children and young people are baptised who are not of the age of religious majority, it is necessary to secure the consent of the parents or guardians in writing, if possible.

#### **6.1.2 Preparation**

If possible, the New Apostolic Creed should be explained to the believers in pastoral discussions before setting the date for Holy Baptism with water. The responsibility the parents assume before God when their children are baptised with water should be explained to them.

#### **6.1.3 Sequence and wording**

##### **6.1.3.1 Liturgical position**

The dispensation of the sacraments is the central event in the (regular) divine service. Holy Baptism with water takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, and can be introduced with a piece of music. If other sacraments or acts of blessing are planned before the celebration of Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- Holy Baptism with water
- adoption
- Holy Sealing
- confirmation

##### **6.1.3.2 Execution**

The sacrament of Holy Baptism with water is dispensed by an Apostle or a priestly minister. The dispensation of the sacrament takes place in front of the altar.

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<sup>44</sup> CNAC 8.1

### Address at the baptism of children<sup>45</sup>

The following is to be expressed:

- Jesus valued the children when He said, “Let the little children come to Me.” Therefore children may also receive the sacraments.
- parents bear responsibility for the child’s upbringing in the Christian faith, as it is proclaimed in the New Apostolic Church.
- the congregation is called upon to comprise a space that allows the child to be strengthened in faith and to feel cared for and loved.
- Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental sacramental act of grace of the triune God bestowed upon a human being.<sup>46</sup> It is necessary for salvation.
- through baptism, the person being baptised is incorporated into the body of Christ, that is, the church of Christ.
- baptism signifies burial and resurrection with Christ.<sup>47</sup>
- through baptism, original sin is washed away.<sup>48</sup>

### Address at the baptism of adults<sup>49</sup>

The following is to be expressed:

- the faith and knowledge of the person being baptised are prerequisites for receiving Holy Baptism with water
- this also includes the profession of the New Apostolic faith, specifically of
  - the triune God,
  - the death, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ, and
  - the sending and authority of the apostolate.
- this faith is practised in daily life and in the fellowship of divine service
- the congregation is called upon to comprise a space that strengthens the faith of the baptised and allows him or her to feel cared for and loved.
- Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental sacramental act of grace of the triune God bestowed upon a human being.<sup>50</sup> It is necessary for salvation.
- through baptism, the person being baptised is incorporated into the body of Christ, that is, the church of Christ.
- baptism signifies burial and resurrection with Christ.<sup>51</sup>
- through baptism, original sin is washed away.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> In the event that persons other than the parents are to assume responsibility for the religious upbringing of the child, the following remarks should be addressed to these guardians.

<sup>46</sup> Mark 16: 16

<sup>47</sup> Romans 6: 4

<sup>48</sup> 1 Peter 3: 21. Original sin is the state of separation from God that came into being through the fall into sin. Through baptism with water the believer is led out of this state. (The human inclination to sin remains).

<sup>49</sup> This also includes older children who take responsibility for themselves.

<sup>50</sup> Mark 16: 16

<sup>51</sup> Romans 6: 4

<sup>52</sup> 1 Peter 3: 21. Original sin is the state of separation from God that came into being through the fall into sin. Through baptism with water the believer is led out of this state. (The human inclination to sin remains).

## Vow at the baptism of children

The officiant asks the congregation to rise and then asks the parents the following:

*“Dear parents, I now ask you before God and the congregation: Do you believe in Jesus Christ and is it your wish to raise your child in the New Apostolic faith and teach him/her to remain faithful to the Lord? Then vow this with a clear yes.”*

If one of the parents is not New Apostolic, this can be supplemented as follows:

*“...in the New Apostolic faith and to support this upbringing...”*

## Vow at the baptism of adults

The officiant asks the congregation to rise and then asks those to be baptised the following:

*“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, and is it your wish to align your life by the gospel as proclaimed by the Apostles? Then vow this with a clear yes.”*

### 6.1.3.3 Prayer following the vow

The vow is followed by a prayer. It may contain the following elements:

- the plea for strength and the ability to keep the vow.
- the plea for a blessed development of the baptised person's faith.

### 6.1.4 Consecration of the baptismal water

The water of baptism is now consecrated. To this end, the minister holds his hand over the baptismal water and consecrates it with the following words:

*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I consecrate this water and dedicate it for the act of Holy Baptism. Amen.”*

### 6.1.5 Act of baptism

This is followed by the act of baptism. To this end, the officiant pronounces the following Trinitarian baptismal formula:

*“I baptise you (possibly mention name) in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”*

As the officiant speaks the words of the baptismal formula, he or she makes the sign of the cross three times on the forehead of the person being baptised. He or she dips his or her hand in the consecrated water each time. The officiant should make sure to use sufficient water.

The aforementioned Trinitarian formula and corresponding actions are repeated for each person being baptised.

The officiant then continues the act of baptism by placing his or her hand on the forehead of the person being baptised and stating the following:

*“Through this holy act, God washes away original sin. You are now incorporated into the body of Christ and thus into the church of Christ.”*

### **Dispensation of the baptismal blessing**

This is followed directly by the baptismal blessing, which is dispensed through the laying on of hands. The following content is recommended:

- God the Father
  - imparts to you His grace and leads you upon the path to salvation and complete redemption
  - accepts you in His love
- God the Son
  - has sacrificed His life for you
  - grants you access to Holy Communion and all the blessings in the house of God
  - grants you His peace
- God the Holy Spirit
  - desires to form and shape you in accordance with the nature of Christ
  - protect you on your path of life and faith.

If you confess Jesus Christ before men, He will also confess you before His Father who is in heaven.<sup>53</sup>

Mandatory conclusion:

*“The blessing of God accompany you! The peace of the Risen One be with you! Amen.”*

#### **6.1.5.1 Introduction of Holy Communion**

After the officiant has conveyed congratulations to the baptised and/or the parents, they return to their seats.

If no other acts or musical contributions are planned, the congregation remains standing and the celebration of Holy Communion follows.

#### **6.1.5.2 Conditional baptism**

A validly dispensed Holy Baptism with water is not repeated. There may be individual cases when believers are unsure of whether they were indeed baptised with water as a child. If it is furthermore impossible to obtain any documentation of such a baptism, a conditional baptism can be performed. Such a baptism will give the believer security on the one hand and avoid a rebaptism on the other hand.

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<sup>53</sup> Matthew 10: 32

The conditional baptism is performed in the same manner as Holy Baptism with water. It is introduced with the following words:

*“In the event that you have not yet received Holy Baptism with water, I baptise you in the name of...”*

It is preferred that the conditional baptism take place outside the divine service.<sup>54</sup> The act is documented.

### **6.1.5.3 Baptisms in emergency situations**

In emergency situations in which death may be imminent, children and adults can be baptised by any Christian. Such a baptism is fully valid if it is properly executed, that is, if it is performed with water in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It does not need to be confirmed by a priestly minister. In the case of children, the consent of the legal guardian should be obtained. Adults must express their own will to receive Holy Baptism with water.

The congregational rector is informed and the baptismal act is documented.

## **6.2 Adoption into the congregation**

When guests are adopted into the congregation, they profess the New Apostolic faith and are granted admittance to regular participation in Holy Communion.<sup>55</sup>

### **6.2.1 Prerequisites**

Christians of the age of religious majority can be adopted if they have been properly baptised in another church. The prerequisite for adoption is regular attendance of the divine services, as well as the belief and profession that

- Jesus Christ will return to take home His bride.
- the Holy Spirit is at work in the divine services,
- the apostolate has been sent to prepare the bridal congregation for the return of Christ, and
- the gift of the Holy Spirit is received through Holy Sealing.

Before the adoption of children, it is necessary to secure the written consent of their parents or legal guardians.

### **6.2.2 Preparation**

Guests should be familiarised with the New Apostolic Creed and it should be explained to them in pastoral meetings before they are adopted.

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<sup>54</sup> Chapter 4.7.1

<sup>55</sup> CNAC 12.1.11

## 6.2.3 Sequence and wording

### 6.2.3.1 Liturgical position

The adoption of guests into the congregation is an act of blessing in which the person to be adopted professes the New Apostolic faith and is granted enduring access to Holy Communion. It takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, and can be introduced with a musical contribution.

If several acts are planned before the celebration of Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- Holy Baptism with water
- adoption
- Holy Sealing
- confirmation

### 6.2.3.2 Execution

As a rule, adoptions are performed by priestly ministers. The act takes place in front of the altar.

#### Address

The following content is recommended:

- Holy Baptism with water is the first and fundamental act of grace of God.
- all people who are baptised, who believe in Christ, and who profess Him as their Lord are part of the church of Christ.
- prerequisites for adoption include the belief and the profession that<sup>56</sup>
  - Jesus Christ will return to take home His bridal congregation
  - the Apostles have been sent to prepare the bride of Christ for Christ's return.
  - the gift of the Holy Spirit is received through Holy Sealing.
- the adoption gives the believer permanent access to the celebration of Holy Communion.

#### Adoption vow

The officiant asks the congregation to rise. Thereafter the officiant asks for a profession to the New Apostolic faith:

*"I now ask you before God and the congregation: Do you profess the New Apostolic faith, and is it your wish to follow Jesus Christ and be prepared to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit through the word of God? Then vow this with a clear yes."*

#### Prayer following the vow

The vow is followed by a prayer. It should contain the following elements:

- the plea for the strength and ability to keep this vow.
- the plea for a blessed development of the adopted member's faith.

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<sup>56</sup> Chapter 6.2.1

### 6.2.3.3 Act of adoption

The officiant carries out this act with the following words:

*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, I adopt you into the fellowship of profession and communion of the New Apostolic Church. You now have permanent access to Holy Communion and the blessings of the house of God.”*

Further blessings with the following content may also be expressed:

- may the triune God strengthen the faith and keep the believer in following Jesus Christ.
- may the blessing of God accompany the believer, and the peace of the Risen One be present.

### 6.2.3.4 Introduction of Holy Communion

After the officiant has conveyed congratulations to the adopted members, they return to their seats in the congregation.

If no other acts or musical contributions are planned, the congregation remains standing and the celebration of Holy Communion follows.

## 6.3 Holy Sealing

Holy Sealing is the sacrament through which the believer, through the laying on of hands and the prayer of an Apostle, receives the gift of the Holy Spirit and becomes a child of God with the calling to become a firstling.<sup>57</sup>

### 6.3.1 Prerequisites<sup>58</sup>

Holy Sealing requires the recipients to believe in the triune God and the Apostles sent by Jesus Christ. Prior to this they must have been baptised with water in the proper manner. They must profess their faith and vow to follow Christ. In the Lord’s work of redemption, they will then be prepared for the imminent return of Christ. Holy Sealing is dispensed to both adults and children. When children receive Holy Sealing, their parents—or those responsible for the religious upbringing of the children—must profess the required belief on their behalf and vow to raise the children in the New Apostolic faith.

Before the Holy Sealing of children or young people who have not reached the age of religious majority, it is necessary to secure the consent of parents or legal guardians in writing, if possible.

### 6.3.2 Preparation

In the event this has not yet happened on the occasion of their adoption or baptism, the believers are to be given the New Apostolic Creed, and its contents should be explained in pastoral meetings before the date of Holy Sealing is arranged, if possible. Parents should be made aware of the responsibility they assume before God when their children receive Holy Sealing.

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<sup>57</sup> CNAC 8.3

<sup>58</sup> CNAC 8.3.7

### **6.3.3 Sequence and wording**

#### **6.3.3.1 Liturgical position**

Holy Sealing takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer, and can be introduced by way of a musical contribution. If several acts are planned before the celebration of Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- Holy Baptism with water
- adoption
- Holy Sealing
- confirmation

#### **6.3.3.2 Execution**

Holy Sealing is dispensed exclusively by the Apostle ministry. The act is performed in front of the altar.

#### **Address at the sealing of children**

The following content is recommended:

- the gift of the Holy Spirit is dispensed, which means that the Spirit of God makes His permanent abode within the person.
- this act completes that which was begun in Holy Baptism with water: the rebirth out of water and the Spirit is now complete, and childhood in God has been bestowed.
- the child receives the prerequisite for becoming a firstling and belonging to the bride of Christ.
- the parents bear responsibility for raising their children in the New Apostolic faith.<sup>59</sup>

#### **Address at the sealing of adults**

The following content is recommended:

- the gift of the Holy Spirit is dispensed, which means that the Spirit of God makes His permanent abode within the person.
- this act completes that which was begun in Holy Baptism with water: the rebirth out of water and the Spirit is now complete, and childhood in God has been bestowed.
- the believer receives the prerequisite for becoming a firstling and belonging to the bride of Christ.
- those who have been sealed are now numbered among those whom God prepares for the return of Christ through the Apostle ministry. They are to allow themselves to be guided and strengthened by the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>59</sup> In the event that persons other than the parents are to assume responsibility for the religious upbringing of the child, the following remarks should be addressed to these guardians.

## Vow

As witness to the dispensation of the sacrament and the vow of faithfulness, the congregation is asked to rise. The Apostle asks the parents of the child to vow that they will raise their child in the New Apostolic faith, or in the case of adults, asks them to profess this faith and vow to follow Christ.

### *Holy Sealing of a child*

Liturgically binding text of the question to parents where both are New Apostolic:

*“Dear parents, I now ask you before God and the congregation: Is it your wish to raise your child in the New Apostolic faith, as it comes to expression in the Creed, and will you teach your child to remain faithful to the Lord and prepare for His return through word and sacrament? Then vow this with a clear yes.”*

If one of the parents is not New Apostolic, this can be supplemented as follows:

*“...raise your child in the New Apostolic faith and support this upbringing...”*

### *Holy Sealing of adults*

Liturgically binding text of the question:

*“I now ask you before God and the congregation: Do you profess the New Apostolic faith as it comes to expression in the Creed, and do you wish to follow Jesus Christ and allow yourself to be prepared for His return through word and sacrament? Then vow this with a clear yes”.*

## Prayer following the vow

A prayer follows after the vow. It should contain the following elements:

- the plea for God’s blessing upon this vow.
- the plea for the triune God to bestow the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- the plea to God the Holy Spirit to accompany those who are to be sealed and to fill them with the strength to allow the gift of the Spirit to become active.

### **6.3.3.3 Act of Holy Sealing**

The proper dispensation of this sacrament requires the gesture of the laying on of hands as a visible sign. While laying his hands upon the forehead of the person being sealed, the Apostle dispenses the gift of the Holy Spirit with the following words:

*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*

This can be followed by statements with the following content:

- The triune God is the one who now acts upon you.<sup>60</sup>
- He loves you and has drawn you to Himself.
- God seals you for the day of the return of Christ.<sup>61</sup>
- You receive the seal of God as a sign of your deliverance.
- Hereby you have been called to serve at the side of Christ in the kingdom of peace.
- Jesus Christ writes your name into the Lamb's Book of Life.<sup>62</sup>
- The gift of the Holy Spirit has the following effects:
  - It establishes childhood in God.
  - It makes you an heir of eternal life and a joint heir with Christ.<sup>63</sup>
  - It also gives you the prerequisite for becoming a firstling in the kingdom of God and for belonging to the bride of Christ.
- It is the pledge of future glory.<sup>64</sup>
- Through Holy Sealing, the Spirit of God makes His permanent abode in a human being. God Himself grants him or her a share in His nature: "The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us."<sup>65</sup>
- With this act you become fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone."<sup>66</sup>
- The Holy Spirit will comfort, strengthen, and protect you.

Mandatory conclusion:

*"The blessing of God accompany you. The peace of the Risen One be with you. Amen."*

#### **6.3.3.4 Introduction of Holy Communion**

After the officiant has conveyed congratulations to those who have been sealed, they return to their seats. If no other acts are planned, the congregation remains standing and the celebration of Holy Communion follows.

### **6.4 Holy Communion**

Holy Communion is the central event in the divine service. It also occupies a significant place in the consciousness and lives of the believers. In Holy Communion, the reality of God and His devotion to mankind can be directly experienced.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> 2 Corinthians 1: 21–22

<sup>61</sup> Ephesians 4: 30

<sup>62</sup> Revelation 21: 27

<sup>63</sup> Titus 3: 5–7; Romans 8: 17

<sup>64</sup> Ephesians 1: 14

<sup>65</sup> Romans 5: 5/CNAC 8.3.9

<sup>66</sup> Ephesians 2: 19–20

<sup>67</sup> CNAC 8.2

### **6.4.1 Prerequisites**

A prerequisite for receiving Holy Communion is Holy Baptism with water. Only those who have been baptised should partake in Holy Communion. All those who have been baptised, adopted, or sealed in the New Apostolic Church are entitled to regularly partake in Holy Communion.

Christians from other denominations who have been baptised in the proper manner can partake of Holy Communion as guests. In pastoral discussions it should be made clear to them that Holy Communion is a meal of profession of the Son of God, who died, resurrected from the dead, and will come again.

Secession or excommunication from the New Apostolic Church also voids admission to Holy Communion. Upon readmission to the New Apostolic Church with the consent of the District Apostle, the believer is once again granted access to Holy Communion. The fundamental prerequisites for partaking worthily of Holy Communion are belief and a repentant heart filled with longing for salvation.<sup>68</sup>

The preparation and execution of the sacrament of Holy Communion is exhaustively described in chapters 4.5.2.13 and 4.5.2.19 et seq.

## **6.5 Confirmation**

Upon confirmation, young New Apostolic Christians assume the obligations which their parents undertook on their behalf at their baptism and sealing. From then on, as Christians who have reached the age of spiritual majority, they bear full responsibility before God for everything they do or neglect to do. They commit themselves to faithfulness to God and publicly profess the New Apostolic faith.<sup>69</sup>

### **6.5.1 Prerequisites**

The age of confirmation varies. It depends on the religious maturity and/or the stage in life at which adolescents are generally able to assess the consequences of their actions on their own and assume responsibility for their life of faith. Attending the divine services and Confirmation Instruction is a prerequisite for being confirmed.<sup>70</sup>

### **6.5.2 Preparation**

Adolescents are brought up in the faith in their parental home, in divine service, and through religious education in the Church. Besides serving to prepare for confirmation, Confirmation Instruction—as the last phase of religious education in the Church—serves primarily to ensure that the confirmands

- know the essential principles of our doctrine, in particular the ten Articles of Faith,
- appreciate the value of faith,
- earnestly endeavour to conduct their lives in accordance with the gospel, and
- align their lives with the goal of our faith, the return of Christ.

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<sup>68</sup> CNAC 8.2.18; 8.2.21

<sup>69</sup> CNAC 12.2.2

<sup>70</sup> CNAC 12.2.2.1

### **6.5.3 Sequence and wording**

#### **6.5.3.1 Liturgical position**

The act of confirmation exists in direct association with the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Sealing and therefore takes place after the absolution and the Eucharistic prayer.

As a rule, no further acts take place in confirmation services, other than confirmation and the celebration of Holy Communion.

The act of confirmation can be introduced by a piece of music. The officiant, or a member of the congregation appointed by him or her, reads out the letter from the Chief Apostle, which is later handed out to the confirmands.

#### **6.5.3.2 Execution**

Confirmations can be performed by a priestly minister or an Apostle. The act takes place in front of the altar.

#### **6.5.3.3 Address**

The following content is recommended.

The confirmands

- assume responsibility for their life of faith.
- publicly profess the New Apostolic faith as it comes to expression in the Creed.
- promise to remain faithful to the triune God.
- receive the blessing of God to help them keep their vow of faithfulness.
- are invited to actively engage themselves in congregational life with their gifts and talents.

#### **Confirmation vow**

The congregation is asked to rise. Thereafter, the officiant asks the confirmands to profess their belief in the New Apostolic faith:

*“I now ask you in the presence of God and the congregation: Do you profess the New Apostolic faith as it comes to expression in the Creed? Is it your wish to align your lives with Jesus Christ and to be prepared for His return? If this is the case, then vow it with a clear yes.”*

The officiant then thanks the confirmands for their yes, and asks them to give their confirmation vow before God and the congregation. This is spoken by the confirmands together and states the following:

*“I renounce Satan and all his work and ways, and surrender myself to You, O triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in belief, obedience, and the earnest resolution to remain faithful to You until my end. Amen.”*

#### **Prayer for God’s blessing**

After their yes and the confirmation vow, the officiant asks God for His blessing in a brief prayer.

#### **6.5.3.4 Dispensation of blessing**

The confirmation blessing is dispensed by laying on of hands with the following words:

*“In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the blessing on your confirmation.”*

The following is recommended as further content:

- God the Father
  - has chosen you from eternity to be His children and has granted you the rebirth out of water and the Spirit.
  - give you the strength to keep your confirmation vow.
- God the Son
  - has sacrificed His life for you.
  - has elected you to be part of the bridal congregation.
  - be with you always
  - grant you His peace.
- God the Holy Spirit
  - strengthen your faith and give you the strength to keep your vow.
  - preserve you on your path of life and faith.
  - prepare you for the return of Christ.

Mandatory conclusion:

*“The blessing of God accompany you! The peace of the Risen One be with you! Amen.”*

The officiant congratulates the confirmands and welcomes them into the congregation and into the circle of the youth as responsible Christians. The congregation remains standing.

After the officiant has conveyed his or her best wishes, the confirmands return to their seats in the congregation. If the act of confirmation is concluded with a piece of music, the congregation takes a seat.

#### **6.5.3.5 Introduction of Holy Communion**

This is followed by the celebration of Holy Communion.

### **6.6 Engagement**

Engagement represents a serious promise of marriage. If desired, the engagement blessing can be dispensed during a divine service. The engaged couple publicly declares before the congregation their intent to prepare themselves for marriage in a manner pleasing to God. Upon this they receive the blessing of God.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> CNAC 12.2.3.3

### **6.6.1 Prerequisites**

An engagement blessing can be dispensed if

- both bride and bridegroom are eligible for marriage according to statutory provisions,
- at least one partner is New Apostolic,
- the couple is not cohabiting, and does not plan to do so in the foreseeable future.

### **6.6.2 Preparation, sequence, and wording**

In those cultural regions in which engagement blessings are generally sought, the District Apostles will provide information concerning the preparation, sequence, and wording of this act of blessing.

## **6.7 Blessings on wedding anniversaries<sup>72</sup>**

Blessings are dispensed for the following anniversaries:

- silver wedding anniversary (25 years)
- ruby wedding anniversary (40 years)
- golden wedding anniversary (50 years)
- diamond wedding anniversary (60 years)
- iron wedding anniversary (65 years)
- platinum wedding anniversary (70 years)
- diamond anniversary blessing (75 years)

### **6.7.1 Sequence and wording**

#### **6.7.1.1 Liturgical position**

The dispensation of a wedding anniversary blessing takes place after the celebration of Holy Communion. If several acts are planned after Holy Communion, they are to be performed in the following sequence:

- retirement, termination of an appointment or assignment bound to a ministry
- ordination, appointment, assignment, reinstatement
- termination of, or assignment to, a service that is not bound to a ministry
- engagement blessing, wedding blessing, wedding anniversary blessing

#### **6.7.1.2 Execution**

The dispensation of a wedding anniversary blessing is performed by a priestly minister or an Apostle. The act takes place in front of the altar or at the seat of the anniversary couple.

A piece of music is usually performed as an introduction to this act.

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<sup>72</sup> CNAC 12.2.3.2

### 6.7.1.3 Address

The following content can be expressed:

- praise and thanksgiving for divine protection and help
- where appropriate, special events in the couple's matrimony
- where appropriate, the work the couple has performed in the congregation or district
- where appropriate, a Bible text can be shared with some brief comments

### Prayer for God's blessing

The congregation rises for a prayer, in which the plea for God's blessing comes to expression.

### 6.7.1.4 Dispensation of blessing

The anniversary couple is asked to join their right hands. The officiant places his or her hand on top of the hands of the couple and dispenses the blessing with the following words:

*"In the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receive the blessing of God on your (...)<sup>73</sup> wedding anniversary."*

The following content may be expressed:

- God has protected you in the time that lies behind you.
- You are commended to His continual care.
- God awaken good thoughts within you so that you may bring joy to one another.
- May God continue to bless your marriage bond.
- May He prepare you for the return of Jesus Christ.

Mandatory conclusion:

*"The blessing of God accompany you! The peace of the Risen One be with you! Amen."*

### 6.7.1.5 Transition to closing prayer

After the officiant has congratulated the couple, a piece of music may follow. This is followed by the closing prayer.

## 6.8 Acts of blessing performed outside of the divine service

### 6.8.1 Prenatal blessing

Through the prenatal blessing God strengthens the mother in promoting and cultivating the prenatal development of her child in terms of its faith. The blessing also benefits the unborn child and thereby imparts to the mother the certainty that both she and her child are secure in the hand of God.

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<sup>73</sup> The wedding anniversary should be specifically named, for example: "on your silver wedding anniversary".

### 6.8.1.1 Liturgical position

The prenatal blessing is dispensed as the first visible act of God upon a human being. The act of blessing is performed upon the mother at her request. As a rule it is dispensed in the context of a pastoral care visit.

### 6.8.1.2 Execution

The prerequisite for receiving the blessing is that the pregnancy has been confirmed by medical diagnosis.

No promise of a problem-free pregnancy or the birth of a healthy baby is associated with the prenatal blessing.

The prenatal blessing is dispensed by the Apostle or a priestly minister.

### Address

The act of blessing is prepared as follows:<sup>74</sup>

- the prenatal blessing is the first visible act of God upon a human being.
- in this blessing, God strengthens the mother to promote the prenatal development of her child.
- the blessing also benefits the unborn child. Both mother and child are secure in the hand of the Lord.
- for as long as the child grows in the womb of the mother, it is connected to her in all things. It absorbs whatever the mother introduces into her body, soul, or spirit. Therefore the mother can have a positive influence on the unborn child through prayer and by consciously involving the child in her life of faith.

### Prayer

The minister asks those present to rise, if possible. The act of blessing begins in the name of the triune God. In the ensuing prayer, the officiant gives thanks to God for the developing new life and asks Him to provide the prenatal blessing.

### 6.8.1.3 Dispensation of blessing

After the prayer, the minister dispenses the prenatal blessing with the following words, while laying his hands upon the forehead of the mother:

*“Receive the prenatal blessing in the name of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.”*

This can be followed by statements with the following content:

- the soul of the unborn child has been created by God. The child is called to be in the image of God.
- both child and mother are commended to the care of God during the pregnancy.
- may the grace of Jesus Christ accompany both the unborn child and its mother
- may God the Holy Spirit grant the mother the strength to provide for the well-being of the unborn child according to body, soul, and spirit.

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<sup>74</sup> CNAC 12.2.1

Mandatory conclusion:

*“The blessing of God accompany you! The peace of the Risen One be with you! Amen.”*

#### **6.8.1.4 Closing prayer**

The act of blessing concludes with a prayer and the benediction.

## **7 Pastoral care**

### **7.1 Objectives and guiding principles**

The objective of pastoral care in the New Apostolic Church is to support our neighbour on the path that leads to redemption from sin and death and into the image of Christ. The foundation for this, and the ability to do this, can only be found in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The earnest endeavour of the believers to grow into the nature of Christ is supported by sensitive pastoral care.

The Apostles and the ministers commissioned by them have the task of helping the believers to become prepared and worthy for the return of Christ. Until then, they will accompany those entrusted to them with pastoral care on their personal path through the most diverse circumstances of life.<sup>75</sup>

All members of a congregation, including ministers and their families, will receive pastoral support. Pastoral care can only be effective when a relationship of trust is developed and assured by confidentiality.

### **7.2 Limits of pastoral care**

As those providing pastoral care, ministers are to respect the personal responsibility of the members and their freedom of choice. Giving advice in matters such as medicine, law, psychology, or therapy is in no way within the scope of pastoral care. Members are to be referred to professionals. Personal lifestyle choices are entirely at the discretion of the members themselves. No minister has the right, and certainly not the duty, to make decisions concerning the personal affairs of members. If desired, the ministers will naturally support those entrusted to them in pastoral care with sensitive counsel in the various situations of life, both in prayer and with sincere empathy.<sup>76</sup>

### **7.3 Pastoral care bound to a ministry**

Ministers are responsible for pastoral care. They have the task of building up a relationship of trust with the believers and of providing support to them in all situations of life. Ministers stand by those entrusted to them in all their concerns and questions, and promote their spiritual development through discussions about spiritual matters.

### **7.4 Pastoral care without a ministry**

Beyond that, pastoral care is also the task of the entire congregation.<sup>77</sup> The instruction of children in various classes, as well as the care of young people and other groups within the congregation are part of pastoral care.

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<sup>75</sup> CNAC 12.4

<sup>76</sup> CNAC 12.4.3

<sup>77</sup> CNAC 12.4

## **7.5 The pastoral care discussion**

In the pastoral care discussion, the ministers address believers on a personal level. The content of the conversation is strictly confidential. In the process, the ministers are to attune themselves to respond to the needs of their conversation partners. They are called upon to listen attentively and patiently. They will make the endeavour to strengthen faith in God, and in His support and help.

Faith is a significant component of the pastoral care visit. Subjects of discussion can include topics from divine services, experiences of faith, and questions concerning the doctrine.

If the ministers feel it a necessary element of their responsibility, they will provide advice in a pastoral capacity. Ministers offer to pray together with the members. In the process, they bring to expression their thanks, as well as the concerns that have been discussed. They will also continue to intercede in prayer on behalf of the members.

In the case of serious concerns, it may be appropriate to involve higher ranking ministers. However, this can only happen with the express agreement of the members in question.<sup>78</sup>

## **7.6 Confession**

In religious language, confession refers to the acknowledgement of sins or the admission of one's guilt in the presence of a minister. No confession is needed for the forgiveness of sins. Nevertheless, if someone is unable to find peace, he or she has the option of making his or her confession directly to the Apostle.

In cases of special urgency in which the Apostle cannot be reached—for example in the case of the dying—any priestly minister can, as an exception, take the confession and proclaim absolution. The responsible Apostle will be informed about this act immediately thereafter.<sup>79</sup>

## **7.7 Pastoral care for ministers**

Congregational rectors, district rectors, Bishops, and Apostles are responsible for the pastoral care of those ministers assigned directly to them, including their families. Beyond that, they see to it that their own family members also have access to a minister in whom they can trust. Additional divine services for ministers and ministers' meetings serve to strengthen faith and promote uniform direction for the exercise of their ministry.

## **7.8 Instruction for children**

It is an important task of the ministers and teachers to support parents in their responsibility to help their children grow up as convinced New Apostolic Christians.<sup>80</sup>

The teaching materials made available by the Church are to be used in the various levels of instruction. The competency profiles included in the Appendix are to be taken into account when selecting and training teachers.

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<sup>78</sup> Chapter 3.20.6

<sup>79</sup> CNAC 12.4.4

<sup>80</sup> CNAC 12.4.1

## **7.9 Youth care**

Pastoral care and support for our young brothers and sisters is a special focus in the work of our Church. Our youth receive age-appropriate care and support; however, they do not form a separate group within the congregation. They are encouraged to become involved in the congregation's many activities, and to practise, profess, and stand up for their faith in their surroundings. Youth leaders, who are trained and supported for their work by the Church, assist our young members.<sup>81</sup> The competency profiles included in the Appendix are to be taken into account when selecting and training youth leaders.

## **7.10 Pastoral care for special groups**

The Regional Churches are free to develop special pastoral care offers for members in special phases or circumstances of life.

## **7.11 Care of members who live far away**

If members live far from the nearest congregation for a lengthier period of time—or permanently—and can therefore not attend the divine services, the Apostle will review other suitable options for providing them with pastoral care. Members should be encouraged to communicate their need for such pastoral care.

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<sup>81</sup> CNAC 12.4.2

## 8 Music

The purpose of music in the divine service is to praise and honour God.<sup>82</sup> The role of music is always to serve, and it can serve multiple functions: it can deeply move the soul, prepare the congregation for the proclamation of the word, and underscore the word of God.<sup>83</sup>

The guidelines concerning music in the divine services issued by the Regional Church are to be observed.

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<sup>82</sup> Psalm 150

<sup>83</sup> CNAC 12.1.14

## 9 Congregational events and activities

The congregation is the place where church life is experienced and develops. The foundation of church life is always the congregation's relationship to Jesus Christ and His gospel, and for this reason the divine service is of central importance. In addition to divine services and various kinds of instruction, devotionals, congregational meetings, discussions, and other events that promote fellowship can take place in the congregation.

### 9.1 Devotionals

A distinction must be made between devotionals and prayer services.<sup>84</sup> Possible occasions for devotionals could be church holidays or social events, but also memorial days or catastrophes. For example, devotionals can be held on Christmas Eve, Good Friday (hour of Christ's death), Maundy Thursday (the institution of Holy Communion), or Ascension Day. Devotionals can also be used for evangelising or for fellowship with other confessions. A devotional always has a Christian content.

A devotional has no liturgical form. It is therefore not a special type of divine service. The presence of ministers is not necessary when conducting a devotional. Its sequence is determined by the person conducting it. A devotional is not conducted from the altar. There is no proclamation of the word as in a divine service, and no dispensation of sacraments or acts of blessing. A devotional begins and concludes with a prayer. There is no Trinitarian formula and no benediction.

The rector or district rector decides on whether a devotional may be conducted in the church building. Its format must be appropriate to the holiness of the place of worship.

### 9.2 Congregational meetings

A congregational meeting creates the opportunity to discuss various topics of congregational life with interested members. The objective is to strengthen the members' identification with the congregation, profit from the ideas of those in attendance, listen to proposals, and explain decisions. In an atmosphere of mutual esteem, it is also possible to address problems and conflicts, and to find solutions for them. The rector's responsibility to lead and make decisions remains unaffected.

The rector prepares for such a congregational meeting by consulting with his leaders beforehand.

### 9.3 Discussions

Upon request, discussions can be arranged in consultation with the rector for specific faith-related topics or for specific groups (for example, parents, members in mourning, etc.).

### 9.4 Events that promote fellowship

It is recommended that various events promoting fellowship be offered in the scope of the congregation's abilities and financial resources. Possible occasions for this might include congregational celebrations, excursions, events for children, or youth activities.

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<sup>84</sup> Chapter 5

## 10 Interdenominational and interreligious cooperation

### 10.1 Ecumenism

While respecting the self-conceptions of each, the New Apostolic Church's relationship with other Christian churches is open and seeks to emphasise the commonalities of the Christian faith.<sup>85</sup> The following guidelines apply to the Church's participation in ecumenical events.

#### 10.1.1 Ecumenical events

We understand ecumenical events to be activities that different churches and Christian denominations execute collectively. Participation in ecumenical events is possible.

##### 10.1.1.1 Divine services and acts of blessing

Since, despite many commonalities, there are differing conceptions on various matters, in particular as concerns ministry, we are in agreement with our ecumenical counterparts that there will not be any joint sacramental acts or acts of blessing. This means that there will be no joint celebrations of Holy Communion or baptismal acts, and no joint dispensations of blessing at weddings or funerals.

If participation in other collective church events is planned, the responsible church leaders will discuss this in advance.

In our churches, addresses by the clergy of other confessions should not be given from the altar. Addresses by New Apostolic ministers in other churches should not be made from the altar or pulpit either.

Ecumenical divine services begin and end without a gesture of blessing. The New Apostolic liturgy is not used in these divine services. Following is a selection of Bible passages from which a blessing may be chosen:

#### Blessings at the beginning of an ecumenical divine service

1 Corinthians 1: 3	"Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."
1 Peter 5: 14 (excerpt)	"Peace to you all who are in Christ Jesus."
Isaiah 57: 19 (excerpt)	"'Peace, peace to him who is far off and to him who is near', says the Lord."

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<sup>85</sup> CNAC 13.5.2

*For the season of Advent and Christmas*

Luke 2: 14	“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”
Luke 19: 38 (excerpt)	“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

**Blessings at the close of an ecumenical divine service**

Philippians 4: 7	“The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
1 Corinthians 1: 3	“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
2 Thessalonians 3: 16	“Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all.”
Romans 15: 13	“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”
Numbers 6: 24–26	“The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine upon you, and be gracious to you; the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and give you peace.”

**10.1.1.2 Special congregational events**

At church dedications, congregational anniversaries, or other congregational events it is possible for the clergy of other denominations, or for representatives of the municipality or state, to convey a greeting.

**10.1.1.3 Weddings**

In divine services incorporating the dispensation of a wedding blessing, or in special wedding services, the active involvement of the clergy of another denomination is possible at the request of the partner who is not New Apostolic. Such involvement can take the form of a prayer, a greeting, or the expression of best wishes. This occurs outside of the actual act of blessing.<sup>86</sup>

**10.1.1.4 Holy Baptism with water**

In divine services in which Holy Baptism is dispensed, it is possible for a clergy member from another church or denomination to give an address at the request of the non-New Apostolic parent or guardian. The address follows that of the New Apostolic officiant. Thereafter, the minister of the other denomination returns to his or her seat in the congregation, and the New Apostolic minister performs the act of baptism. During both addresses, the parents or guardians will stand in front of the altar with their child. Prior consultation between the clergy involved is required.

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<sup>86</sup> Chapter 4.6.6

Beyond that, it is also conceivable for family members to participate in the musical framework of the baptismal act with a musical performance.

#### **10.1.1.5 Funerals**

Eulogies can be given at the end of a funeral service. At the request of close relatives, a minister of another denomination may also speak some words of comfort during the funeral. This applies equally to funerals at cemeteries, funeral chapels, and funeral services conducted in our church buildings.

#### **10.1.1.6 Other ecumenical events**

Within the scope of our ecumenical efforts, it is possible to jointly execute choral and musical events, panel discussions, presentations, benefit events, or other events together with other denominations. These are events that take place outside of the context of the divine service and its liturgy.

Regardless of whether we act as hosts or guests, the following applies:

- the District Apostle decides whether or not we will participate in such ecumenical events.
- greetings or prayers that are consistent with our doctrinal statements may be spoken.
- the stipulations governing our Church's public relations work, as well as the external profile and identity of our Church, must always be followed.

#### **10.1.1.7 Church exhibitions and conventions**

Our participation in church fairs and other multiregional church exhibitions deserves special attention. It is indeed possible for us to participate in these events, provided that the manner and implementation of the event are consistent with our convictions.

#### **10.1.2 Use of Church premises**

If necessary, our church premises can be made available to other denominations for church use. Our divine services and other congregational activities must not be adversely affected by third-party use. The sanctity of the space is to be preserved.

In return, the church buildings of other denominations may also be used for our church purposes. The District Apostle makes the final decision concerning this.

### **10.2 Interreligious dialogue**

The international presence of Islam has led to growing interaction—as well as marriages—between Christians and Muslims, and at times it happens that a blessing is also requested upon such marriages. In addition, there are increasing inquiries into the possibility of organising collective Christian-Muslim prayers and devotionals on the occasion of special public events, but also in the wake of accidents and tragedies.

What is common to the three Abrahamic religions—namely Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—is the fact that all three worship God as the Creator who blesses all believers, regardless of the fact that Jews and Muslims reject the trinity of God. Like Christians, both Jews and Muslims profess one true God. New Apostolic Christians can therefore indeed pray together with Jews and Muslims.

### **10.2.1 Participation in divine services**

The involvement of Jewish or Muslim clergy in a New Apostolic divine service requires the approval of the District Apostle and must be carefully coordinated with the non-Christian clergy member in good time.

It is not permissible for non-Christian clergy of monotheistic religions to be actively involved in New Apostolic divine services. They may not become active in sacraments or other acts of blessing.

### **10.2.2 Involvement of non-Christian clergy in wedding ceremonies**

The dispensation of a wedding blessing is possible even if one of the parties involved is a non-Christian.<sup>87</sup> A wedding blessing in our Church is dispensed in the name of the triune God. Abstaining from such reference to the Trinity in such a blessing out of consideration for the non-Christian clergy member or partner in marriage is not possible, because belief in the triune God is among the fundamental professions of the Christian faith.

It is not permissible for non-Christian clergy to be actively involved in sacramental acts or acts of blessing in the New Apostolic Church. Nevertheless, it is possible for non-Christian clergy to convey a greeting or message of congratulation outside of the divine service, that is to say, after the final benediction. This regulation and the reasoning behind it must be expressly pointed out to Jewish or Muslim clergy in a conversation that should take place well in advance.

### **10.2.3 Involvement of non-Christian clergy in funerals**

Outside of the funeral service—that is, after the closing benediction—it is possible for non-Christian clergy to convey a message of comfort.

### **10.2.4 Participation in devotionals**

Devotional ceremonies organised in response to special events, in which common prayers for God's help—or common thanksgiving to God for His protection—are brought to expression, can certainly be organised collectively by New Apostolic, Jewish, and Muslim clergy.

### **10.2.5 Use of Church premises**

The rental or lending of Church premises to non-Christian communities and associations should be avoided, and is only possible with the express permission of the District Apostle.

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<sup>87</sup> CNAC 5.3.7.1

## **11 Events in the context of public relations work**

In the context of our public relations work we also cultivate contacts with organisations in the public sphere. There is a whole series of events in which Church representatives also participate. Our participation serves primarily to provide public information to the community, establish contacts, and cultivate good neighbourly relationships. In the process, a message or greeting may also be conveyed.

## 12 Implementing the Mission of the New Apostolic Church

The Mission of the New Apostolic Church states the following:

*“Reaching out to all people in order to teach them the gospel of Jesus Christ and to baptise them with water and the Holy Spirit. Providing soul care and cultivating a warm fellowship in which everyone shall experience the love of God and the joy of serving Him and others.”*

In principle, the gospel calls upon all Christians to profess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Already in their conduct of life, but also in their conversation, true Christians will continually endeavour to bring their relationship with Jesus Christ to expression in their surroundings. They will not try to impose their faith upon anyone, but they will not hide it either.

In particular, the New Apostolic ministers are called upon to be an example of their faith in their surroundings, both in word and deed. It should be a priority for them to lead people to God wherever possible and to tell them about their conviction of faith. Beyond that, the ministers support and promote the endeavours of the members of the congregation to implement the Mission statement.

## **13 Administration**

### **13.1 Organisation**

The New Apostolic Church International (in the following: NACI) is an independent association in accordance with Swiss law. The incumbent Chief Apostle and Apostles in the active service of the New Apostolic Church in all countries of the world are incorporated as members within NACI. Together with all New Apostolic Regional Churches—with each maintaining its legal independence—NACI comprises a globally active whole Church with a uniform doctrine under the leadership of the Chief Apostle as its highest minister.

### **13.2 The Regional Church**

The Regional Churches are established in accordance with the respective national laws. The congregations of a particular region can be grouped into districts for the purposes of pastoral care. The District Apostle assures the continuing development of the organisational structure in collaboration with the institutions of the Regional Church.

### **13.3 Membership**

Believers gain membership in their congregation's Regional Church upon receiving the sacrament of Holy Sealing. A member's transfer to a congregation of another Regional Church establishes membership in that Regional Church.

Church membership is terminated by a declaration of secession from the Church, in accordance with the legal regulations applicable to the Regional Church. Readmission to the Church requires the consent of the District Apostle or Apostle.

### **13.4 Membership data**

The District Apostles are responsible for collecting, maintaining, and updating membership data, and for forwarding membership statistics to NACI administration. The respective data protection regulations are to be followed.

### **13.5 Documentation of the divine services**

For each divine service, the number of participants, the total amount of offerings, the name of the officiant, and the respective Bible text are to be recorded and documented. The District Apostles issue the regulations governing this procedure.

## Appendix 1

### Competency profile for the Deacon ministry

1	Core duties	Deacons have the ministerial authority to properly proclaim the word of God and dispense the Trinitarian blessing in the divine service. They support the Priests in pastoral care. Beyond that, Deacons can also perform other spiritual services in the congregation.
2	Personal prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age of majority</li> <li>▪ Advocate the New Apostolic Creed</li> <li>▪ Well-ordered economic and personal circumstances</li> <li>▪ Regular divine service attendance</li> <li>▪ Acceptance in the congregation</li> <li>▪ Sufficient free time for pastoral care</li> <li>▪ Willingness to participate in ministers' meetings and Church training events</li> </ul>
3	Spiritual competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knowledge of the basic principles of the New Apostolic faith</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the Bible</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the liturgy of the divine services</li> <li>▪ Authentic life of faith</li> </ul>
4	Personal competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability and willingness to serve along in a divine service</li> <li>▪ Unprejudiced approach to the members of the congregation and guests</li> <li>▪ Discretion in confidential matters</li> <li>▪ Conciliatory attitude</li> <li>▪ Reliability</li> </ul>

Not all of the competencies listed need to be present before the ministry is assumed. These can also be acquired in the course of the exercise of ministry.

## Appendix 2

### Competency profile for the Priest ministry

1	Core duties	Priests have the ministerial authority to properly proclaim the word of God, dispense sacraments, and dispense the Trinitarian blessing in the divine service. They are responsible for the pastoral care of the members of the congregation. Beyond that, Priests can also perform other spiritual services in the congregation.
2	Personal prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age of majority</li> <li>▪ Advocate the New Apostolic Creed</li> <li>▪ Well-ordered economic and personal circumstances</li> <li>▪ Regular divine service attendance</li> <li>▪ Acceptance in the congregation</li> <li>▪ Sufficient free time for pastoral care</li> <li>▪ Willingness to participate in ministers' meetings and Church training events</li> </ul>
3	Spiritual competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ In-depth knowledge of the New Apostolic doctrine</li> <li>▪ Good knowledge of the liturgy of the divine services and acts of blessing</li> <li>▪ Good knowledge of the Bible</li> <li>▪ Authentic life of faith</li> </ul>
4	Personal competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability to conduct divine services</li> <li>▪ Unprejudiced approach to the members of the congregation and guests</li> <li>▪ Ability to impart contents of faith</li> <li>▪ Discretion in confidential matters</li> <li>▪ Conciliatory attitude</li> <li>▪ Reliability</li> </ul>
5	Leadership competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability to provide practical guidance and support to Deacons in pastoral care</li> <li>▪ Proper handling of information</li> </ul>

## Appendix 3

### Competency profile for congregational rectors<sup>88</sup>

1	Core duties	<p>Congregational rectors are responsible for the congregation in both a spiritual and organisational respect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They are responsible for the pastoral care of the ministers and their families</li> <li>▪ They conduct meetings of ministers and functionaries on a congregational level</li> <li>▪ They support the ministers and functionaries in the performance of their duties</li> <li>▪ They perform special pastoral care duties in the congregation</li> <li>▪ They prepare believers for Holy Baptism with water and for acts of blessing</li> <li>▪ They prepare believers for Holy Sealing on behalf of the district rector</li> <li>▪ They preside over the adoption of guests on behalf of the district rector</li> <li>▪ They ensure compliance with Church regulations</li> <li>▪ They guarantee the required flow of information</li> <li>▪ They are responsible to the district rector and the Apostle for the congregation in an administrative capacity</li> <li>▪ They promote the development of the competencies of the ministers and functionaries</li> <li>▪ They explore the need for additional ministers and functionaries, and make corresponding proposals to the district rector</li> <li>▪ They promote the involvement and participation of all members of the congregation in congregational life in line with the Vision and Mission of the Church</li> </ul>
2	Personal prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They bear the Priest ministry<sup>89</sup></li> <li>▪ Acceptance among the ministers</li> <li>▪ Sufficient free time for pastoral care and management of the congregation</li> <li>▪ Ability to handle pressure</li> </ul>
3	Spiritual competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Same as for the Priest ministry</li> </ul>
4	Personal competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability to preach</li> <li>▪ Ability to represent the congregation in public</li> <li>▪ Same as for the Priest ministry</li> </ul>

<sup>88</sup> This competency profile likewise applies to delegate congregational rectors

<sup>89</sup> The personal prerequisites for the Priest ministry thus also apply to the congregational rector.

5	Leadership competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ability to implement the <i>Serving and Leading</i> model</li><li>▪ Ability to communicate</li><li>▪ Ability to resolve conflicts</li><li>▪ Composed approach to difficulties</li><li>▪ Ability to take criticism</li><li>▪ Ability to delegate</li><li>▪ Ability to work in a team</li><li>▪ Ability to inspire others</li></ul>
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## Appendix 4

### Competency profile for district rectors<sup>90</sup>

1	Core duties	<p>District rectors are responsible for the congregations in the district in both a spiritual and organisational respect.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They conduct divine services in all congregations of the district</li> <li>▪ They ensure that the gospel is proclaimed purely in the congregations</li> <li>▪ They provide pastoral care to the congregational rectors and their families</li> <li>▪ They conduct meetings of ministers and functionaries on a district level</li> <li>▪ They explore the need for ministers in the district and make proposals to the Apostle</li> <li>▪ They support the congregational rectors and functionaries in the performance of their duties on a district level</li> <li>▪ They perform special pastoral care duties in the district</li> <li>▪ They preside over the adoption of guests</li> <li>▪ They prepare believers to receive the sacrament of Holy Sealing</li> <li>▪ They ensure compliance with Church regulations</li> <li>▪ They guarantee the required flow of information</li> <li>▪ They are responsible to the Apostle for the district in an administrative capacity</li> <li>▪ They promote the development of the competencies of the ministers</li> <li>▪ They promote cross-congregational participation and involvement of congregational members in line with the Vision and Mission of the Church</li> </ul>
2	Personal prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They bear the Priest ministry<sup>91</sup></li> <li>▪ Acceptance among the congregational rectors</li> <li>▪ Sufficient free time for the pastoral care and management of the district</li> <li>▪ Ability to handle pressure</li> </ul>
3	Spiritual competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Same as for the Priest ministry</li> </ul>
4	Personal competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ability to preach</li> <li>▪ Ability to represent the district in public</li> <li>▪ Same as for the Priest ministry</li> </ul>

<sup>90</sup> This competency profile likewise applies to delegate district rectors.

<sup>91</sup> The personal prerequisites for the Priest ministry thus also apply to the district rector.

5	Leadership competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ability to implement the <i>Serving and Leading</i> model</li><li>▪ Ability to communicate</li><li>▪ Ability to resolve conflicts</li><li>▪ Composed approach to difficulties</li><li>▪ Ability to take criticism</li><li>▪ Strategic thinking</li><li>▪ Ability to delegate</li><li>▪ Ability to work in a team</li><li>▪ Ability to inspire others</li></ul>
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## Appendix 5

### Competency profile for teachers

1	Core duties	<p>Teachers conduct Church lessons for children within the framework of the teaching concepts and teaching materials made available to them by the Church. Together with the ministers they support parents in their responsibility to raise their children as convinced New Apostolic Christians (CNAC 12.4.1).</p> <p>They support the children in a pastoral capacity by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ reinforcing the personal faith of the children through their own example,</li> <li>▪ standing by the children with prayer and encouragement in their concerns,</li> <li>▪ promoting the integration of the children into congregational life, and</li> <li>▪ organising and leading children’s leisure activities.</li> </ul> <p>In all their duties, teachers work closely with the congregational rector and the parents of the children.</p>
2	Personal prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age of majority</li> <li>▪ Regular divine service attendance</li> <li>▪ Acceptance among the children</li> <li>▪ Willingness to work in collaboration with the congregational rector and parents/guardians in a spirit of trust</li> <li>▪ Willingness to participate in the Church’s training events for teachers</li> </ul>
3	Spiritual competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Profession of the New Apostolic doctrine</li> <li>▪ Established, authentic personal conviction of faith</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the basics of the New Apostolic faith.</li> </ul>
4	Personal competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good knowledge of the content and methods of the respective teaching materials</li> <li>▪ Understanding for the age-related concerns of children</li> <li>▪ Empathy for the children’s world</li> <li>▪ Good communication skills, including the ability to listen</li> <li>▪ Sufficient time to prepare and lead lessons</li> <li>▪ Creativity in the implementation of teaching content</li> <li>▪ Teaching skills</li> <li>▪ Ability to organise</li> <li>▪ Confidentiality in matters of confidence</li> <li>▪ Reliability</li> </ul>

Not all of the above-mentioned competencies need to be present prior to the assignment. They can also be acquired during the exercise of this duty.

## Appendix 6

### Competency profile for youth leaders

1	Core duties	<p>Youth leaders lead a congregational or district youth group. They inspire the young people for the values of the Christian faith, help them establish these in their lives, and thereby help them develop into personalities with strength of faith and a sense of responsibility (CNAC 12.4.2.2).</p> <p>They promote</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ the New Apostolic conviction of faith of the young people and</li> <li>▪ the integration of the young people into church life, including their active participation.</li> </ul> <p>They provide pastoral care and serve as discussion partners for the young people, and—in consultation with their congregational or district rector—they preside over</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ divine services for youth, as ministers,</li> <li>▪ youth discussions, and</li> <li>▪ youth activities</li> </ul> <p>In collaboration with the teachers, youth leaders support the transition of the confirmands into the youth.</p>
2	Personal prerequisites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Age of majority</li> <li>▪ Regular divine service attendance</li> <li>▪ Acceptance among the young people</li> <li>▪ Willingness to work in collaboration with the congregational rector and district rector in a spirit of trust</li> <li>▪ In the case of a district youth leader: willingness to work in co-operation with the congregational youth leaders.</li> <li>▪ Willingness to participate in the Church's training events for youth leaders.</li> </ul>
3	Spiritual competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Profession of the New Apostolic doctrine</li> <li>▪ Established, authentic personal conviction of faith</li> <li>▪ Knowledge of the basics of the New Apostolic faith.</li> </ul>
4	Personal competencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Openness in thinking and in dealing with critical questions</li> <li>▪ Understanding for the age-related concerns of young people</li> <li>▪ Empathy for the young people's world</li> <li>▪ Good communication skills, including the ability to listen</li> <li>▪ Sufficient time to provide pastoral care to the youth</li> <li>▪ Ability to organise</li> <li>▪ Confidentiality in matters of confidence</li> <li>▪ Conciliatory attitude</li> <li>▪ Reliability</li> </ul>

5	Leadership competencies	Required for district youth leaders, desirable for congregational youth leaders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Ability to implement the <i>Serving and Leading</i> model</li><li>▪ Ability to resolve conflicts</li><li>▪ Composed approach to challenges</li><li>▪ Ability to take criticism</li><li>▪ Ability to delegate</li><li>▪ Ability to work in a team</li><li>▪ Ability to inspire others</li></ul>
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The competencies mentioned do not all have to be present before the assignment. They can also be acquired during the exercise of these duties.