

PYT 2019 Commissioning Service

(Delegates are invited to the front of the worship space)

INTRODUCTION

Leader: Today we commission these delegates as attendees of the Presbyterian Youth Triennium. They will travel to Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana and join thousands other youth from around the country for several days of worship, small groups, recreation, and growth. The theme of Triennium is "Here's My Heart," taken from the hymn *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*, which will explore what it means when we offer our hearts to God and especially - how God offers God's heart to us.

As we begin this service of commissioning let us sing together, the first verse of *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*.¹ (If you elect not to include the Giving of the Ebenezer, sing the first two verses.

Sing Verse 1

PROMISES OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Leader: The first letter of John says, "...let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action."² Participants, God has called you to experience this amazing conference, but not just to be there, but to put yourself fully out there, the true self that is you, in search of a deeper connection with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. As you offer your hearts to experiencing the Triennium I ask you to make these promises:

Do you promise to open your hearts to all that God will offer to you as you experience the Presbyterian Youth Triennium?

Participants: We do.

Leader: Do you promise to give of your hearts to those around you to help them also grow in faith?

Participants: We do.

Leader: Do you promise to share your hearts with others when you return so that even those of us who do not attend the Presbyterian Youth Triennium might be blessed by your presence there?

Participants: We do.

¹ Hymn #475 (*Glory to God*, 2013), #356 (*The Presbyterian Hymnal*, 1990)

² 1 John 3:18 (NRSV)

PROMISES OF THE LARGER CHURCH

Leader: (to the congregation) As our youth and their leaders have made promises for when they embark on this journey, we as representatives of the Church universal are also called to participate with them in their experience through our promises to them. Therefore, do we as representatives of the Church universal promise to pray for our participants and seek to learn from them what they learned at the Presbyterian Youth Triennium when they return? Do we?

Congregation: We do!

(Leader invites congregation to sing the second verse)

Sing Verse 2

GIVING OF THE EBENEZER (optional)³

Youth Leader/Elder: In the book of Samuel we find that an Ebenezer was a stone that was set upright as a memorial after the Lord had done a mighty act on behalf of the people. The point of the Ebenezer was to be a visual and physical reminder that the hand of God brought them to that place. As you go, we give you this _____,⁴ as an Ebenezer, a stone of help, as you travel to Purdue. Take it with you as you go. May it serve as a reminder that God has sent you to Purdue and that you go with our love and our prayers.

(Leader invites congregation to sing the second verse)

Sing Verse 3

COMMISSIONING PRAYER (Unison)

Leader: Let us pray, joining our voices together.

All: Holy God, through never ending streams of mercy, guide and protect our young people and their leaders as they attend the Presbyterian Youth Triennium. Tune their hearts to sing your praise and fill them with your wondrous grace. Transform their lives through this experience so that they may further build your Kingdom through their gifts and leadership. Through Christ, we pray. Amen.

³ If you choose not to do this part of the commissioning service, sing both the second and third verse then move straight to the commission Prayer.

⁴ This blank is where you describe what you have selected to give the delegation as their "Ebenezer." Some suggestions for this are a stone that is native to the area the group is from, or perhaps there is a stone somewhere on your church grounds that might be used. If a stone does not seem ideal, be creative and find something that reminds the group of home, the region you are in, or something about your congregation.

DECLARATION OF COMISSIONING

Leader: You are now commissioned as attendees to the 2019 Presbyterian Youth Triennium. As you go, may God bless, fill, and seal your heart with love, joy, and grace.⁵

This resource was created by the Rev. Jeremy Wilhelmi, PC(USA). Rev. Wilhelmi is the chaplain at the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Arkansas and a member of the 2019 Production Team for the Presbyterian Youth Triennium. This will be his 6th Triennium.

⁵ You could end the commissioning service by passing the peace of Christ.