

The Founding of a Church

The Laying of the Corner Stone

from

The Book of Occasional Services

I certify this booklet conforms with the office of “The Founding of a Church, The Laying of the Corner Stone” from the 2020 edition of the Book of Occasional Services of the Reformed Episcopal Church.

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II. THE LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE

¶ *Before the service, the Foundation Symbols, namely, the Cross, the Holy Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, the Record of Founders, and any other articles to be deposited in the Corner Stone, shall be ready at the place of vesting.*

¶ *The Record of Founders, copies of which shall be filed with the Bishop and with the Clerk of the Congregation, shall contain the names of the Bishop, the Clergy and Lay Officials of the Congregation, and the Contributors to the building.*

¶ *The Bishop, or a Priest appointed by him, shall officiate. Having vested nearby, the Ministers shall go in procession, with the people, to the site of the new Church, singing or saying the Prayer Book Litany or the Litany for the Church.. Appointed laymen shall bear the Foundation Symbols. An appointed Minister shall read the Lesson, as follows.*

Hear the words of the Apostle Peter.

1 St. Peter 2:1-10

WHEREFORE laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, as newborn babies desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be that ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore it is contained in the scriptures, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they are appointed.

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But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.

¶ *Here may follow a Hymn and an Instruction or Sermon. Then the persons appointed shall deposit the Foundation Symbols in the Corner Stone, as follows.*

1. The Cross

Layman. I place the Cross of Christ in this foundation; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

People. Amen.

Officiant. God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross;

People. For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

2. The Holy Bible

Layman. I place the Holy Bible in this foundation; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

People. Amen.

Officiant. Seek ye out the Book of the Lord and read;

People. For we are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief Corner Stone.

3. The Book of Common Prayer

Layman. I place the Book of Common Prayer in this foundation; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

People. Amen.

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Officiant. Prayer shall be made ever unto him, and daily shall he be praised;

People. That we may continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.

4. The Record of Founders

Layman. I place the Record of Founders in this foundation; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

People. Amen.

Officiant. A book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his Name;

People. This shall be written for those who come after, and the people which shall be born shall praise the Lord.

¶ *Then mention shall be made of any other articles to be deposited, and they shall be placed in the stone. After which, while the following Antiphon and Psalm are being sung or said, the receptacle shall be sealed and the Corner Stone made ready for laying.*

Antiphon. Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: * judgment also will I lay to the line, and righteousness to the plummet.

Confitemini Domino. from Psalm 118

O GIVE thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious;
Because his mercy endureth for ever.

Let Israel now confess that he is gracious;

And that his mercy endureth for ever.

Let the house of Aaron now confess;

That his mercy endureth for ever.

Yea, let them now that fear the Lord confess;

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That his mercy endureth for ever.

The Lord is my strength and my song,

And is become my salvation.

The voice of joy and health is in the dwellings of the righteous;

The right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

The right hand of the Lord hath the pre-eminence;

The right hand of the Lord bringeth mighty things to pass.

Open me the gates of righteousness;

That I may go into them, and give thanks unto the Lord.

This is the gate of the Lord;

The righteous shall enter into it.

I will thank thee for thou hast heard me;

And art become my salvation.

The same stone which the builders refused,

Is become the head stone in the corner.

This is the Lord's doing,

And it is marvellous in our eyes.

This is the day which the Lord hath made;

We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Help me now, O Lord;

O Lord send us now prosperity.

O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is gracious;

And his mercy endureth for ever.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

¶ *Then the Officiant shall say,*

O LORD, Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, who art the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, the one foundation, and the chief corner stone: Bless what we do now in laying this stone in thy Name, and be thou,

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we beseech thee, the beginning, the increase, and the consummation of this work, which is undertaken to the glory of thy Name, who with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest, one God, world without end. Amen.

¶ Then, assisted by the builders, the Officiant shall lay the stone, and striking it three times with a trowel, shall say,

I LAY this Corner Stone; In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

HERE let the true faith and fear of God, with brotherly love, ever abide; and may this place now set apart with prayer, and with the invocation and praise of the Most Holy Name, be evermore the Temple of the Most High God; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

¶ Here trumpets may be sounded, and the Officiant shall say,

PRAISE ye the Lord, because the foundation of the House of the Lord is laid!

¶ And the people shall reply with a loud voice,

ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA! ALLELUIA!

¶ Here a Hymn may be sung. Then the Officiant shall conclude with the following.

Anthem. Except the Lord build the house, their labour is but lost that build it; * the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his.

¶ Minister and people.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

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OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it
is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us
our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
Amen.

Prosper thou the work of our hands upon us;
O prosper thou our handy-work.
Let thy merciful kindness, O Lord, be upon us;
Like as we do put our trust in thee.
The Lord be with you.
And with thy spirit.

Let us pray.

O ALMIGHTY God, who hast built thy Church upon the
foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ
himself being the head corner stone: Grant us so to be joined
together in unity of spirit by their doctrine, that we may be
made an holy temple acceptable unto thee; through the same
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ *Here shall follow the Collect of the Name of the Church. Then the Offi-
ciant shall say,*

O GOD, who laid the foundations of the earth: Make sure
this cornerstone and the foundation of the Church now
begun in thy Name, and bless all who take part in this holy
undertaking; remember for good those who give alms; guide
those who plan and direct the work; give skill to the workmen
and protect them from harm; that the building of thy temple
may be completed, to the glory of thy holy Name; through
Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy
Ghost, be all honour and glory, world without end. Amen.

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BE strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the Lord God, even my God, will be with thee: he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the Lord; And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be with you, and remain with you always. Amen.