

## CLOSING SERVICE: Example One

### Welcome and Call to Worship

We are gathered today to leave this church building which has been a faith home for many generations. We are gathered to celebrate the life it has experienced and to recognise that the Spirit of God continues to live and breathe in this community.

### Opening Responses

God, whose creative glory we see in the rushing wind and the swirling waters,  
**and whose love is revealed in the smile of a child,**  
**will remain with us.**

God, whom we have discovered in the scriptures, and who has discovered us,  
**and who comes clear to us in Jesus and in the lives of the saints,**  
**will remain with us.**

God, whom we encounter in the worship and service of faith communities,  
**whose Spirit is within the pastoral caring and the justice-seeking of this church,**  
**will remain with us.**

God, gracefully known in the hard places of our earthly life's journey,  
**and who laughs and celebrates joyfully with us here,**  
**will remain with us.**

God, who will be with us as this life ends,  
**who is with us in time and beyond time,**  
**will remain with us.**

Let us worship our loving and faithful God.

Hymn 463: To God be the glory...

### Prayers of Thanksgiving

Eyes open prayer. After the words "Loving God" the response is "We give you thanks."

**On table: bible, worship book, hammer, hymn book, the candle.**

The baptismal font, the communion table with Worship Book, the pulpit and lectern with bible, this whole worship space, enable us to thankfully remember the countless services of worship and sacraments celebrated in this place, and to bring to mind the ministers and local preachers who have led worship.

*(A time of silent remembering)*

For this worship space, Loving God,

**We give you thanks.**

These chairs and the worshippers who have faithfully gathered on Sundays are reminders of the congregations who have gathered over the generations for the Sunday services, for Christmas and Easter, for funerals, weddings and baptisms, and other celebrations that have taken place here.

*(A time of silent remembering)*

For worshippers over the years, Loving God,

**We give you thanks.**

This hymn book and this organ are reminders of the countless music sung and played to express our faith and praise our living God.

*(A time of silent remembering)*

For all the musicians and singers who have led us in song,  
Loving God,  
**We give you thanks.**

This hammer is a symbol of the many hours dedicated men and women put in over the years to maintain this church building.

*(A time of silent remembering)*

For hard work inside and outside the church, Loving God,  
**We give you thanks.**

This coffee cup and the people who live in this community are reminders of social gatherings in this church building: of children and youth events in the past, of the Oasis Coffee Bar, of Church Fairs. They are reminders of the friendship and support shown to one another.

*(A time of silent remembering)*

For a caring and giving fellowship, Loving God,  
**We give you thanks.**

We come together with so many good and treasured memories, but with a strong sense of grief at saying farewell to this hallowed place.

We come together, also, with great hope for continuing our life of faith.  
For the life of this faith community which will continue on, Loving God,  
**We give you thanks.**  
**AMEN**

Hymn 744: O For a thousand tongues to sing...

Reading: Genesis 12:1-5  
Matthew 28:16-20

### **A Time of Remembering: ask for memories**

Loving God,  
We offer you our memories of this church  
We offer you the memories that we have heard.  
We offer you the memories that we have expressed.  
We offer you the memories that we keep deep within ourselves.  
As you have blessed us in the listening and in the telling,  
So you will bless us as we bring them to mind and share them in the coming days.  
We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who told wonderful stories and shared his experience with his disciples. Amen.

### **Hymn 668: Blessed Assurance**

Reading: Revelation 21:1-7

### **Short Address**

**Hymn 216: And can it be...**

**A Prayer of Letting Go and Moving on**

Let us pray

**We lay down what is past and look to the future**

**We let go of hurt and regret and travel with hope**

**We leave behind familiar paths and take new steps into the unknown**

Loving God,

We place each other and especially the members of this Church into your loving hands.

You hear our deepest feelings of heart and mind and spirit

And you have heard us this afternoon.

We pray that we will continue to be guided by your faithful voice as we move from this place,

Just as you have guided your people since time began.

O God, may we continue to listen to your voice;

O God, may we eternally trust your guiding hand;

O God, may we move with you;

O God, may your peace which passes all knowledge and understanding, be our peace.

In Jesus' name,

**Amen.**

**Hymn 437: Guide me O thou great Jehovah...**

**Commissioning and Blessing**

God remains with us,

**Though we let go of this cherished place.**

God remains with us,

**Though we sing new songs and worship in new ways.**

God remains with us,

**Though we serve in different ways and pursue different causes.**

God remains with us,

**Though we worship in new places.**

God's love remains with us,

**God's justice will inspire us,**

**God's realm will call us to action.**

God is eternally for us and with us.

**Thanks be to God!**

**The Grace**