**LITURGICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CLOSURE OF A CHURCH BUILDING**

**Prayer of the Day**

Bountiful God,

to whose glory this building is dedicated:

we praise you for the many blessings

you have given to those who have worshiped here,

and we pray that all who have sought you in this place may find you,

and being filled with the Holy Spirit

may become a living temple acceptable to you,

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Suggested Readings**

Isaiah 40:1-11

Psalm 100

Hebrews 10:19-25

Matthew 6:25-34

**Sending out prayer**

God remains with us, though we let go of our 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’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!**

**LITANY OF THANKSGIVING FOR THIS PLACE**

*(In place of intercessions)*

 *Representatives from the congregation take their places by the font, the altar, and*

 *in the pulpit.*

 *The priest says*

The baptismal font, the altar, the pulpit, this whole worship space, all enable us to remember with thanks the countless services of worship and sacraments celebrated in this place, and to bring to mind the priests, deacons and lay ministers who have led God’s people in worship.

 *Silence follows.*

For this worship space, loving God,

 **We give you thanks.**

*A representative takes their place by a pew.*

These pews and the worshippers here today are reminders of the congregations

who have gathered over the years for the Sunday services, funerals, weddings, and other celebrations that have taken place here.

 *Silence follows.*

For worshippers over the years, loving God,

 **We give you thanks.**

 *A representative takes their place by items that symbolise hospitality.*

These things bring to mind the many happy times of eating, sharing and working together.

 *Silence follows.*

For a caring and giving fellowship, loving God,

 **We give you thanks.**

 *Representatives take their place by the organ and hymn board.*

This organ and this hymn board remind us of the congregation, the choir members, the organists, and all the other musicians who have proclaimed their faith here in hymns and songs.

 *Silence follows.*

For voices in harmony, for voices united, loving God,

 **We give you thanks.**

*A representative takes their place by items that symbolise the maintenance of the building.*

These things are symbols of the many hours that dedicated men and women have put in over the years to maintain this building.

 *Silence follows.*

For hard work inside and outside the church building, loving God,

 **We give you thanks.**

We come together with so many treasured memories, and with a strong sense of grief at saying farewell to this hallowed place. We come together, also, with great hope for this community’s continuing life of faith, in ways we cannot yet see.

 *Silence follows.*

For the life of this faith community, loving God,

 **We give you thanks.**

 *A Prayer of Letting Go*

There is anger that we have expressed around the closing of this place. There is anger we have held tight within ourselves.

 **We let our anger go. We accept Christ’s way of renewal and peace.**

There is a sense of “What might have been,” that we have clung to, a reluctance to face the realities of this place.

 **We let the old possibilities go. We are ready to grasp fresh possibilities.**

There is a clinging to familiar patterns of worship, a clinging to familiar ways of serving God.

 **We let our patterns go, we are ready to serve God with new friends in new ways.**

We will now have a brief time of silent reflection. During this time you may offer God the feelings, emotions, and attitudes that are weighing you down. We trust God will accept them and deal kindly with them.

 *Silence follows.*

Loving God,

We offer you our memories of this place, so dear to our hearts.

We offer you the memories that we have heard.

We offer you the memories that we keep deep within ourselves.

Bless us as we bring these memories to mind and as we share our stories in the coming days.

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, who shared wonderful stories. **Amen.**

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