

## **Litany of Licensing for Specific Ministry**

### **To be Called**

Marilyn Rudy-Froese: Today we celebrate an important moment in the life of Grace Mennonite Church and all of Mennonite Church Eastern Canada, as you at Grace recognize and celebrate the calling of Jan Steven to serve as a Community Chaplain. Led by God's Spirit, we wish to acknowledge Jan's gifts, given by God, and her training and personal attributes and commitments, that allow her to serve Christ in unique ways in the broader community as a member of Grace congregation.

Doug Schulz: Jan, the Grace congregation is delighted to honour the life-giving connections you have created both within the church and in reaching out in the Niagara community, and beyond in several locations. In your people care work you bring a wonderful weave of the capacity to inspire and energize through your wonderful sense of humour and creative self-expressions, and the ability to listen deeply in order to affirm people's stories and then help them see God's touches in their lives in the past and at present and in future potential.

Jan Steven: I am filled with gratitude, joy, and eagerness to serve Jesus, Grace, MCEC, and our community – locally and beyond. I covet your prayers, wisdom, and encouragement.

### **To Commit**

M R-E: Jan, you have committed yourself to chaplaincy ministry within Mennonite Church Eastern Canada (MCEC) rooted here as a member of Grace Mennonite Church. We charge you, in this role, to endeavor to be faithful to God in Christ as revealed in the Scriptures.

DS: We trust that you would remain open to the leading of the Spirit. You have sometimes expressed your way of understanding spiritual life and work as a courageous commitment "to build a better world". Let the Spirit lead you in heart and mind to find voice and power to be effective in making that real all the time.

M R-E: We charge you to be sensitive to the needs of people, and to serve in the spirit of love.

JS: God being Our Helper, I sincerely accept the charge to pastoral ministry here at Grace Mennonite Church and within MCEC. I recommit myself as a Believer in and Follower of Jesus Christ. And, with my whole heart, I will serve -- humbly, kindly, justly, and at times imperfectly -- with my sisters and brothers in this congregation and in the wider community. I commit myself to prayer, to listening for the words of God through Scripture and community, and to sharing the Grace of Jesus, the Love of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit, as is understood and practiced by the Mennonite Church.

M R-F: On the basis of this commitment to the call to ministry within MCEC, and with the support of Grace Mennonite Church, I, on behalf of the Leadership Council of MCEC, affirm your calling as a chaplain and license you for specific ministry as a community chaplain. [To the congregation] As a congregation, you have called Jan to this community ministry, and she has responded with the promise to faithfully serve in this way. I charge you: support Jan's ministry with your prayers; encourage her as she expresses and explores the gifts God has given her; and with her, be seekers of truth, followers of Jesus Christ, and co-workers in God's kingdom.

Everyone: [Congregation reading in unison from 'bulletin' handout] Jan, we pledge to be partners with you as seekers of truth, followers of Jesus Christ and co-workers in God's kingdom. We offer our support and our prayers. We commit ourselves to encourage you and grow with you as we weave together a story of shared faith in this place, and of witness to the world of God's amazing grace.

### **To Carry Out**

DS: Jan, we have some things to present to you to inspire you as you carry this congregation in your heart and mind while you voluntarily minister among us and carry out acts of life-enriching kindness in the broader community. We've placed them on the communion table for you to take later.

The salt & pepper shakers represent the power of your energetic personality and life-giving spirit. May you generously and judiciously 'shake good flavour' everywhere in your caring ministry. And the sunflowers represent the way you bring the colour of effervescent energy, good humour, and genuine interest in people to everyone, everywhere – in cards you write, calls you make, emails you send, or visits undertaken. You show up in people's lives beaming like the sun.

David Brubacher: Jan, I add my voice to the celebration of your passion for people and community. You have exercised your gifts in various places you have lived and here among us at Grace. Your heart for those who on the margin of society and those who may not have the personal and pastoral support needed is a gift to our congregation. Your gifts and passion make you an ideal candidate for the role of Community Chaplain. While Church Council has affirmed you in this role for some time, today it feels good to finally be able to officially celebrate your gifts and call. On behalf of Church Council, I affirm the ministry you are undertaking among us and in the wider community, and I wish you an abundance of God's grace.

JS: Thank you from the bottom of my heart for these awesome symbols and your generous words – I will keep them in my head and my heart. It is a gift to love and serve alongside everyone as together we serve as ambassadors for our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **To Covenant**

M R-F: Today, we will be signing a “covenant regarding ethics in ministry.” Commissioned church servants walk with people through some personal and vulnerable times in their lives and spiritual journey. For that reason, we agree to carry out our ministry with integrity – respecting confidences, telling the truth, respecting sexual and other boundaries, and respecting the work of other leaders.

As congregations, we agree to pray for our servant leaders and respect the role they have been given. We will support them in their work, and also encourage them to practice self-care by taking time to study, to play, to pray, and to spend time with colleagues, family and friends.

As a wider church, we will work with integrity and respect for both congregations and leaders through times of transition, crisis and review.

This covenant recognizes these promises.

M R-F (cont'd): Normally, we would invite many to surround Jan for a prayer with laying on of hands. Instead, I will invite her to stand and be joined by her husband Laurence as I lead us in a prayer of dedication. If you are comfortable doing so, lift up and reach out a hand toward Jan in a symbol of support and empowerment at this time. [Prayer of Dedication]