

# GUIDELINES FOR THOSE REPORTING ON THE ASSESSED SERVICE



## Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to assess and report on a service of worship being led by a candidate for the ordained ministry of word and sacrament. This is an important part of the whole candidating process, and your report will eventually be seen by those involved with subsequent interviews at both the local and synod levels, before being forwarded to the Assembly assessment conference. By way of preparation please note the following points:

- Assessing a service conducted by a candidate for ministry is **NOT** the same as the formal assessment of lay preachers. By the time LPs are assessed they will have almost completed their training which, for most, will have meant three years on the '*Training for Learning and Serving*' programme. Candidates for ministry, on the other hand, could be very inexperienced and, in some cases, may never have conducted an entire service before. Your assessment therefore needs to make allowances for this, recognising that training for ministry is still to come.
- It is advisable to make contact with the candidate before the day of the service just to confirm the arrangements. On the day itself please arrive early enough to enable you to introduce yourself before the service begins. You may also wish to speak to the candidate afterwards but, if so, it is suggested that comments are confined to requests for clarification about anything you feel relevant to your report, rather than trying to offer any kind of detailed debrief.
- While your own experience and insight is clearly important for this process, one's own personal theological outlook and preferences should not get in the way of the assessment.
- It is important that the report does **NOT** seek to offer any recommendations about the candidate's suitability or otherwise for further training – that is more properly the task of the later interviews, although clearly they will be informed by the various papers, including references and your report. However it may be appropriate to comment on specific training that could be required for the leading of worship.

## **The Service**

The following list is not exhaustive, nor will you necessarily cover all the points mentioned, but it might be useful in outlining the areas you are most likely to want to keep in mind:

- Choice of music/hymns/worship songs – relevance to the theme and the particular congregation's tradition;
- Use of scripture, including use of lectionary if followed – but note that some congregations are less wedded to the lectionary than others;
- Use of non-biblical material – eg poems and alternative textual material;
- Use of media other than the spoken word – eg visual and symbolic, PowerPoint;
- Prayers – their variety, scope, relevance to the congregation and world, use of silence;
- Sermon – length, structure and development, use of scripture, relevance to the congregation and today, use of language, use of illustrations and stories;
- Family time/children's address (where included) – ability to relate to children and young people.

## **For Further Reflection and Reporting**

Once you come to write the report it may be useful to bear in mind the following additional points:

- The degree to which the service helped you to worship;
- The degree to which the service helped others in the congregation to worship – although this can be difficult to assess accurately;
- The candidate's ability to relate to the congregation throughout the service;
- Evidence of personal faith and commitment on the part of the candidate;
- Evidence of personal conviction about his/her message;
- Evidence displayed by the candidate regarding an openness to further learning and development.

Again this list is not exhaustive but, hopefully, will provide a suitable framework for your report, although you should also feel free to alter anything to take account of particular insights. The final report should then be jointly agreed by both assessors, before submitting it to the synod office as follows:

(Synod Office address here)

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Should you have any further questions please speak to any of the following:

(Insert name(s) of appropriate people here)

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June 2013

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