

Chapter 6

ORDINATION OF MINISTERS

A. Regulations

5750. That portion of the ritual of ordination entitled, “Examination of Candidates” (5772) has the authority of statutory law, and must be followed as prescribed.

5752. The ordination service shall be planned by the Council of Ordination (1405; 3070:6) and shall be presided over by the General Superintendent (1935:15), or by a representative appointed by the General Superintendent (3091), or if neither of the above is present, by the district superintendent (1310:23). They shall be assisted in the various parts of the service and in the act of ordination by the Council of Ordination (1405; 3070:6).

B. The Order of the Ordination of Ministers

Call to Worship

5755. *(The appointed minister shall commence the service with a Call to Worship, such as Isa. 52:7; 1 Cor. 1:21-24; 2 Cor. 4:5-6).*

Hymn

(Then the congregation shall join in singing a hymn, such as: “Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak,” “A Charge to Keep I Have,” “Lead on, O King Eternal,” “Soldiers of Christ, Arise,” “Conquering Now and Still to Conquer.”)

Invocation

(Then the minister appointed shall give the invocation:)

Almighty God, giver of all good things, who by the Holy Spirit has appointed ordained ministers in the church, grant us Your assistance in this service given to the ordination of such ministers, and mercifully behold *these* Your *servants*, now called to this office, and replenish *them* so with the truth of Your doctrine, and adorn *them* with innocence of life, that both by word and good example *they* may faithfully serve You in this office to the glory of Your

name and the edification of Your church, through the merits of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, world without end. Amen.

Sermon

(Then the General Superintendent or the minister appointed (3091) shall preach the ordination sermon, cf. 1935:15.)

Presentation of Candidates

5758. *(Then the district superintendent or the appointed representative shall have those to be ordained to stand and shall present them to the General Superintendent, saying:)*

I present *(read names aloud)* to be ordained as *(a) minister(s)* in The Wesleyan Church and in the church universal.

Acceptance of Candidates

(Then the presiding minister (5752) shall say to the people:)

Dear friends, *these* are *they* whom we purpose, God willing, this day to ordain *ministers*. For, after due examination, we find that *they* are truly called to this function and ministry, and that *they are* qualified for the same.

(The ordinands shall be seated, after which the appointed ministers shall read the Epistle and the Gospel, respectively:)

The Epistle

5762. “I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power. Although I am less than the least of all God’s people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things” (Eph. 3:7-9, NIV).

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ” (Eph.4:11-13, NIV).

The Gospel

5765. “Therefore Jesus said again, ‘I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep . . . I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me—just as the Father knows me and I know the Father—and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd’” (John 10:7, 9-16, NIV).

The Charge

5768. *(Then the presiding minister (3091;5752) shall ask the candidates to stand for the Charge and the Examination and shall address the candidates, giving the Charge:)*

Dear *Servant(s)* of God:

You have heard, both in your private examination by the district board of ministerial development and in the message which has just been delivered, something of the importance of the ministry to which you are called. You are *undershepherd(s)* of the Good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, called to teach and admonish, to feed and provide for the Lord’s family, to bring the lost into the fold, to bring each person unto the fullness of the stature of Christ.

Remember always the greatness of this responsibility and give *yourselves* without reservation unto the ministry to which God has called you. We charge you to pray daily for divine guidance and strengthening so that by your study of the Scriptures and your own personal growth and development you may both model the ideal of Christ and lead your people to live in keeping with His example and instructions.

Examination of Candidates

5772. *(Then while the candidates remain standing, the presiding minister (3091; 5752) shall administer the Examination to the candidates:)*

This assembled congregation represents the church of Jesus Christ everywhere as they witness your responses to the inquiries we shall make of you. In this way we shall understand your mind and will in these things, and you may also be moved to greater faithfulness in doing your duties.

Question: Is it your sincere conviction that you have been called of God to the office and work of a minister, and are you persuaded that you ought to fulfill that call by serving as an ordained minister in The Wesleyan Church and among God's people everywhere?

Answer: That is my sincere conviction.

Question: Do you believe the Holy Scriptures are the fully inspired and inerrant written Word of God, containing sufficiently all doctrine necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Christ Jesus? Are you determined to instruct people from the Scriptures in order that they may be born again in Christ, become committed to holy living, and be prepared to serve for the upbuilding of the Christian community in this present age?

Answer: All of this I believe, and accept as my duty.

Question: Do you cordially accept our Articles of Religion and Membership Commitments, and agree to declare and defend them? And do you recognize your responsibility and cheerfully accept your obligation to promote and support The Wesleyan Church and all institutions and ministries approved by The Wesleyan Church?

Answer: Yes, I do.

Question: Will you with diligence minister the doctrines, sacraments and disciplines of Christ, being always ready to challenge strange doctrine which is contrary to God's Word wherever it may arise?

Answer: I will, as God enables me.

Question: Do you intend to make reading of the Word and effectual prayer your earnest pursuit, and will you seek to make your lifestyle and family government exemplary so far as is possible for you?

Answer: Yes, the Lord being my helper.

Question: Believing that accountability and acceptance of authority is God's design for His church, will you cheerfully accept the direction of those whom the Church may place over you in the doing of your work?

Answer: I will cheerfully do so.

Covenant with Candidates' Spouses

5775. (Then, if it is so desired, the presiding minister (3091; 5752) may call the spouses of the candidates to come and stand beside them, and shall address them saying:)

It is the teaching of Scripture that a spouse shall be a loving companion in the ministry of a mate. You have witnessed the examination of your marriage partner in which commitment to the work and responsibilities of ministry has been stated. Your participation in God's purposes for ministry through your marriage partner is important also. You will be needed to share in prayer, to extend love and compassion to all, to carry forward the example of marriage harmony and family wholesomeness. As the companion of your loved one who is now entering the ranks of ordained ministers in the Church, will you dedicate yourself to complement and embrace that ministry as God enables you?

Answer: I will, by God's grace.

Act of Ordination

5782. *(Then the candidates for ordination shall kneel, and, if so desired, their spouses may kneel at their sides, and the presiding minister (3091; 5752) and the Council of Ordination shall lay their hands severally upon the head of each one, and the presiding minister (3091; 5752) shall say:)*

_____(name)_____, as we lay our hands upon you we ask the Lord to give the unusual outpouring of the Holy Spirit needed for your service as an ordained minister in the Church. May God's anointing enable you to be a faithful exponent of His Word, and an instrument for His holy sacraments, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Amen!

_____(name)_____, take authority to preach the Word of God, to administer the holy sacraments, and to perform the duties of an ordained minister in the Church.

Prayer for Enduement

5785. *(Then the presiding minister (3091; 5752) or other appointed minister shall pray an extemporaneous prayer of enduement or use the following:)*

Our Father, we beseech You to send upon *these* Your *servants* Your heavenly blessings: that *they* may be clothed with righteousness and with the power of the Holy Spirit, that Your Word spoken in *their mouths* may have success and that it may never be spoken in vain. Grant also that we may have grace to hear and to receive what *they* shall deliver out of Your holy Word, as the means of our salvation; and that in all our words and deeds we may seek Your glory, and the increase of Your kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Assist us, O Lord, in all our doings, with Your most gracious favor, and further

us with Your continual help, that in all our works begun, continued and ended in You, we may glorify Your holy name, and finally by Your mercy obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Right Hand of Fellowship

5788. *(The newly ordained ministers shall then arise, and the presiding minister (3091; 5752) and the members of the Council of Ordination shall extend to each the right hand of fellowship, welcoming the newly ordained ministers to the work and labors of the ministry. Then the presiding minister may direct the congregation to file by and greet the newly ordained ministers, or the service may be closed with the following benediction:)*

Benediction

5792. May the God of peace, who through the everlasting covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen! (Heb. 13:20-21, NIV).