

Chapter 7

COMMISSIONING OF MINISTERS

A. Regulations

5800. That portion of the ritual of commissioning ministers entitled “Examination of Candidates” (5825), has the authority of statutory law, and must be followed as prescribed.

5805. The commissioning service shall be planned by the Council of Ordination (1405) and shall be presided over by the General Superintendent (1935:15), or a representative appointed by the General Superintendent (3091), or if absent by the district superintendent (1310:23). They shall be assisted in the various parts of the service and in the act of commissioning by the Council of Ordination (1405; 3059:1c).

B. The Order of the Commissioning of Ministers

Invocation

5810. *(The minister appointed shall give an extemporaneous invocation.)*

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,” “Take My Life and Let It Be.”)

Scripture Reading

(Then the minister appointed shall read a Scripture lesson, such as 1 Tim. 6:3-16; 2 Tim. 1:6-14; 2:1-16, 22-26; 4:1-8; Titus 2:11-15; 3:3-9.)

Sermon

(Then a sermon or address may be given. cf. 1935:15; 3091.)

Presentation of Candidates

5815. *(Then the appointed minister shall bring the candidates and present them*

to the General Superintendent, saying:)

I present (*read names*) to be commissioned as *ministers* in The Wesleyan Church.

(*Then the presiding minister (3091; 5805) shall say unto the people:*)

Dear friends, *these are they* whom we purpose, God willing, this day to commission as *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 Charge

5820. (*Then the presiding minister (3091; 5805) shall address the candidates, giving the charge:*)

Dear *Servants* 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 *undershepherds* 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

5825. (*Then the presiding minister (3091; 5805) shall administer the examination to the candidates:*)

Is it your sincere conviction that you have been called of God to serve as a commissioned minister in The Wesleyan Church?

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

5835. *(Then if it is so desired, the presiding minister (3091; 5805) 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 commissioned 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 Commissioning

5840. *(Then the candidates for commissioning shall kneel, and if so desired,*

their spouses may kneel at their sides, and the presiding minister (3091; 5805) and the Council of Ordination shall lay their hands severally upon the head of each one, and the presiding minister 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 a commissioned 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 sacraments, and to perform the duties of a commissioned minister in the Church.

Prayer for Empowerment

5845. *(Then the appointed minister shall pray an extemporaneous prayer for the empowerment of the Holy Spirit upon each candidate.)*

Right Hand of Fellowship

(The newly commissioned ministers shall then arise, and the presiding minister (3091; 5805) and the members of the Council of Ordination shall extend to each the right hand of fellowship, welcoming them to the work and labors of the ministry. Then the presiding minister may direct the congregation to file by and greet the newly commissioned ministers, or the service shall be closed with the following benediction:)

Benediction

May the God of peace, who through the blood of 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! (Hebrews 13:20-21, NIV).