

The Order for the Ordination of Elders

If there are persons whose ordination is to be recognized, they should be vested with an elder's stole from the beginning of the service.

ENTRANCE

GATHERING

Festive music may be offered while the people gather. The service may then continue with a procession including the worship leaders, other participants in worship, candidates, and bishop(s).

PROCESSIONAL HYMN *

Processional hymns are listed beginning on page 94.

GREETING AND PRAYER *

The bishop greets the people and they respond:

The grace of Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

**God of light and truth,
you led your holy apostles
to appoint ministers in every place.
Guide your church,
through the wisdom of your Holy Spirit,
that we may choose women and men with gifts of grace
for the ministry of service, word, sacrament, and order.
May we uphold them in their work,
and may your reign be extended;
through Jesus Christ, the Shepherd of our souls,
who with you and the Holy Spirit
is worshiped and glorified,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.**

RECOGNITION OF COMMON MINISTRY AND REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

The bishop, standing near a baptismal font, shell, or vessel of water, begins:

Ministry is the work of God,
done by the people of God.

Through baptism

all Christians are made part of the priesthood of all believers,
the church, Christ's body, made visible in the world.

We all share in Christ's ministry of love and service
for the redemption of the human family and the whole of creation.

Therefore, in celebration of our common ministry,
I call upon all God's people gathered here:

The bishop may scoop and pour water from the font, shell, or vessel and say:

Remember your baptism and be thankful.

**We remember our baptism
and affirm our common ministry.**

The people are seated.

PRESENTATION

A layperson and an elder from the Board of Ordained Ministry present to the bishop those who are to be ordained elders. The bishop stands before the Lord's Table, facing the people.

A layperson:

On behalf of the laity of local congregations
who have examined and approved these candidates,

An elder:

and on behalf of the Board of Ordained Ministry of this annual conference,
which has recommended these persons,
and this annual conference, which has approved them,

Together the layperson and the elder:

we present to you these persons to be ordained elders,
and these persons to be recognized as elders:

The full name of each candidate is read aloud by an elder. Each candidate stands when his or her name is read. After all the candidates have been presented, they remain standing, and the bishop says:

These persons are by God's grace
to be recognized or ordained to the ministry of elders.
Those authorized by the Church to inquire about them
have discerned that they are persons
of sound learning and of Christian character,
and possess the necessary signs of God's grace,
and have demonstrated a profound commitment to serve Jesus Christ.
Therefore, we believe them to be duly called to serve God.

We ask you, people of God,
to declare your assent
to the recognition or ordination of these persons.

Do you trust that they are worthy, by God's grace,
to be recognized or ordained elders?

We do! Thanks be to God!

Will you uphold them in their ministry?

With God's help, we will!

The bishop and candidates are seated.

PROCLAMATION

SCRIPTURE LESSON(S)

Suggested Scripture lessons are listed beginning on page 91. If a service of ordination of deacons has preceded this service, a newly ordained deacon may read the Gospel lesson.

Hymns of response to the Scripture are listed beginning on page 93.

SERMON

THE APOSTLES' CREED *

See UMH 881, 882.

[OFFERING]

An offering for the work of God may be received here. When Holy Communion is celebrated, the offering is received prior to the Thanksgiving and Communion, and the financial gifts are brought forward with the gifts of bread and cup. A hymn or anthem may be sung during the offering.

EXAMINATION OF ELDERS

All are seated, except the elder candidates and the bishop, who stand facing each other. The bishop examines the candidates:

Ordination is a gift from God to the church
and is exercised in covenant with the whole church
and within the covenant of the order.

My brothers and sisters,
you have been called to be ordained to the ministry of elders.
The church now confirms your calling through recognition or ordination.

As elders,
you are to be coworkers with the bishops,
deacons, diaconal ministers, deaconesses, home missionaries,
commissioned ministers, local pastors,
and other elders.

Remember that you are called
to serve rather than to be served,
to proclaim the faith of the church and no other,
to look after the concerns of God above all.

An elder
is called to share in the ministry of Christ
and of the whole church:
to preach and teach the Word of God

Here a large Bible may be lifted by an assistant.

and faithfully administer
the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion;

Here a paten and chalice may be lifted.

to lead the people of God in worship and prayer;
to lead people to faith in Jesus Christ;
to exercise pastoral supervision,
 order the life of the congregation,
 counsel the troubled,
 and declare the forgiveness of sin;
to lead the people of God
 in obedience to Christ's mission in the world;
to seek justice, peace, and freedom for all people;
and to take a responsible place in the government of the Church
and in service in and to the community.

These are the duties of an elder.

Do you believe that God has called you
to the life and work of an elder?

I do so believe.

Do you believe in the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
and confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?

I do so believe and confess.

Are you persuaded
that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments
contain all things necessary for salvation
through faith in Jesus Christ
and are the unique and authoritative standard
for the church's faith and life?

I am so persuaded, by God's grace.

Will you be faithful in prayer,
in the study of the Holy Scriptures,
and with the help of the Holy Spirit
continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

I will, with the help of God.

Will you do your best to pattern your life
in accordance with the teachings of Christ?

I will, with the help of God.

Will you, in the exercise of your ministry,
lead the people of God
to faith in Jesus Christ,
to participate in the life and work of the community, and
to seek peace, justice, and freedom for all people?

I will, with the help of God.

Will you be loyal to The United Methodist Church,
accepting its order, liturgy, doctrine, and discipline,
defending it against all doctrines contrary to God's Holy Word,
and committing yourself to be accountable with those serving with you,
and to the bishop and those who are appointed to supervise your ministry?

I will, with the help of God.

Will you, for the sake of the church's life and mission,
covenant to participate in the order of elders?
Will you give yourself to God through the order of elders
in order to sustain and build each other up
in prayer, study, worship, and service?

**I will, with the help of God,
and the help of my sisters and brothers in the order of elders.**

May God,
who has given you the will to do these things,
give you grace to perform them,
that the work begun in you may be brought to perfection.

All audibly affirm the action, saying, Amen.

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER FOR ELDERS

The bishop, facing the candidates, calls the people to prayer, using these or similar words:

As these persons are recognized or ordained by God and the church
for the ministry of elders
to which we believe they have been called by the Holy Spirit,
let us pray for them.

If the setting allows, the candidates kneel.

The people pray for them in silence.

The hymn “O Holy Spirit” (UMBOW 223) or “Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire” (UMH 651) may be sung.

The bishop, with hands extended over those being ordained, prays:

We praise you, eternal God,
because you have called us to be a priestly people,
offering to you acceptable worship through Jesus Christ,
Apostle and High Priest, Shepherd and Bishop of our souls.
We thank you that, by dying, Christ has overcome death
and, having ascended into heaven,
has poured forth gifts abundantly on your people,
making some apostles, some prophets,
some evangelists, some pastors and teachers,
to equip the saints for the work of ministry,
to build up Christ’s body,
and to fulfill your gracious purpose in the world.

Give to these your servants the grace and power they need
to serve you in this ministry.
Make them faithful pastors, patient teachers, and wise counselors.
Enable them to serve without reproach,
to proclaim the gospel of salvation,
to administer the sacraments of the new covenant,
to order the life of the church
and to offer with all your people
spiritual sacrifices acceptable to you;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Representatives from the laity, the ecumenical church, and the order of elders who are to join in the laying on of hands stand with the bishop. When the bishop lays hands on the head of the candidate, others may lay hands on the candidate’s back or shoulders.

Family members and friends may be invited to stand where they are for silent prayer during the laying on of hands for each ordinand.

The bishop lays both hands on the head of each candidate, praying:

Father Almighty (Almighty God), pour upon *Name* the Holy Spirit,
for the office and work of an elder in Christ’s holy church.

*All audibly affirm the action, saying, **Amen.***

Immediately the ordinand places hands on a Bible as the bishop lays both hands on the hands of the ordinand and says:

*Name, take authority as an elder
to preach the Word of God,
to administer the Holy Sacraments
and to order the life of the Church;
in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

*All audibly affirm the action, saying, **Amen.***

RECOGNITION OF ORDERS

The bishop addresses those whose orders as elders are to be recognized:

*After due examination
of your call and ministry in another part of Christ's holy church,
we now welcome you to this communion.
You have given assurance of your faith and Christian experience.
You have renewed the vows of your ordination
and committed yourself to uphold faithfully
The United Methodist Church.
We rejoice that you have been called to serve among us,
and pray that the Spirit of God may guide your ministry.*

As each candidate comes forward, the bishop greets each one:

*Name, we now recognize you as an elder
in The United Methodist Church.*

HYMN *

Here an offering may be received and the Communion elements brought to the table or uncovered if already in place. Deacons prepare the table for the Lord's Supper. See UMBOW 26.

Hymns are listed beginning on page 93.

During the hymn, an elder's stole and/or chalice and paten together, may be given to each elder. The chalices and patens may be used for the Holy Communion that follows.

HOLY COMMUNION

Use the "Thanksgiving and Communion" service beginning with the Invitation and Peace on page 30.

The new elders with others who will be serving the Lord's Supper move to their places.

SENDING FORTH

Here the bishop may make an invitation to those present to respond to God's call to ordained ministry in Christ's church. Appropriate direction for how they are to respond should be given.

[PRAYER

If the Lord's Supper was not celebrated, the bishop says:

Let us pray.

**We thank you, gracious God,
for raising up among us faithful servants.
for the ministry of elders.
Clothe them with your righteousness,
and grant that we, with them,
may glorify you by giving ourselves to others. Amen.]**

DISMISSAL WITH BLESSING *

The bishop blesses the people:

The grace of Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all always.

HYMN *

If the closing hymn is a processional, it should follow the bishop's Blessing and precede the deacon's Dismissal. Otherwise it should precede the bishop's Blessing and the deacon's Dismissal should follow immediately upon the bishop's Blessing. Closing hymns are listed on page 94.

A newly ordained deacon or elder dismisses the people, using these or similar words:

Go in peace
to serve God and your neighbor in all that you do.

We are sent in Christ's name.

Thanks be to God!

GOING FORTH *

A worship leader may announce where the newly ordained elders may be greeted following the service.