

THE ORDINATION OF ELDERS

PRESENTATION OF ELDERS

Beloved in Christ, we present to you this brother, whom we purpose, by Divine approval, to ordain as an Elder. For, after due examination, we find nothing contrary to the belief that he is a person meant for the same. But, if any of you know any crime or impediment in him for which he should not be ordained, you must here and now in the Name of God, come forth and show what such crime or impediment is.

(Should any crime or impediment be charged, the person concerned shall not be ordained until such charge shall have been removed.)

(Then shall the Bishop pray, as follows):

Almighty God, giver of all good gifts, who by Your Holy Spirit, has appointed divers orders of ministers in Your Church, mercifully behold this, Your servant, now called to the office of Elder, and replenish him so with the truth of Your doctrine; and adorn him with innocence and holiness of life, that both by word and good example he may faithfully serve in this office, to the glory of Your name and the edification of Your Church, through the merits of our Savior, Jesus Christ, the Head and Glory of the Church, world without end. Amen.

Scripture: Ephesians 4:7 & 8; 11-13

“But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: ‘When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.’

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 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.”

Scripture: John 10:1-4

“I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all of his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.”

EXAMINATION OF ELDERS

Bishop:

My brother, you have heard in your private examination and in the holy lessons taken out of the Gospel and the writings of the Apostles, of what dignity and importance that office is whereunto you are called. And now again we exhort you, in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that you keep in remembrance the dignity and weight of your calling: to a messenger, watchman and a steward of the Lord; to teach and admonish, to feed and provide for the Lord’s family; to gather the outcasts; to seek the lost; and to be ever ready to spread abroad the glad tidings of reconciliation with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

My brother, we have confidence in you, that you have weighed and pondered these things within yourself many times, and that you have clearly determined by the grace of God to give yourself wholly to this office, whereunto it has pleased God to call you, so that, as much as lies in you, you will apply yourself without reserve to this one thing, and concentrate all your cares and studies upon the same, and that you will continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of Jesus Christ our only Savior, for the blessed indwelling of the Holy Spirit, that by the daily reading and study of the Scriptures you may be thoroughly furnished, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, and that you so conduct yourself that you may be a wholesome and godly example for the people to follow.

And now, that the congregation here assembled, in the name of Christ, may also understand your mind and will in these things, and that this, your promise, may the more move you to do your duty, you shall answer plainly to the things which we, in the name of God and His Church, shall ask of you.

Question: Do you believe in your heart that you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, to the office of an Elder?

Answer: I DO BELIEVE.

Question: Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain sufficiently all doctrine essential to eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ?

Answer: I AM SO PERSUADED BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

Question: And are you determined out of the said Scriptures to instruct the people committed to your charge and to teach nothing as essential to eternal salvation but that which you shall be persuaded may be contained in and proved by the Scriptures?

Answer: I HAVE SO DETERMINED, BY THE GRACE OF GOD.

Question: Will you then give faithful diligence to administer the sacraments, preach the doctrines of Christ, and observe and execute the *Discipline* of the Church as the Lord has commanded you?

Answer: I WILL DO SO, BY THE HELP OF THE LORD.

Question: Will you be ready by all faithful diligence to disprove and banish all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word and to use both public and private admonitions and exhortations as need shall require and occasion shall be given?

Answer: I WILL, THE LORD BEING BY HELPER.

Question: Will you be diligent in prayers and in reading the Holy Scriptures, and in such studies as are helpful to the knowledge of the same?

Answer: I WILL ENDEAVOR SO TO DO, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER

Question: Will you be diligent to fashion yourself and your family according to the doctrine of Christ; and to make both yourself and them, as much as in you lies, wholesome examples and patterns to the flock of Christ?

Answer: I WILL THERETO APPLY MYSELF, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Question: Will you, to the extent of your ability, cultivate and maintain harmony, peace and love among all people, especially among all Christian persons and preeminently among those who are committed to your care?

Answer: I WILL DO SO, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Question: Will you reverently submit to your superiors in office, unto who is committed the charge over you; following with a ready heart and willing mind their godly counsels and admonitions?

Answer: I WILL DO SO, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

(Then shall the Bishop, or the presiding officer, say:)

God Almighty, who has given you this will to do all these things, grant also unto you fullness of ability to perform, that He may accomplish His work begun in you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Having duly examined the candidate to be ordained as an elder, we are now ready to proceed with the ordination of this brother.

The wife of the candidate will please join her husband at the altar, standing at his left.)

ALL SING THE HYMN: Come, Holy Ghost, Our Souls Inspire (*Tune name: Hamburg*)

Come, Holy Ghost our souls inspire.

And lighten with celestial fire.

Thou the anointing Spirit art,

Who dost Thy seven-fold gifts impart.

Thy blessed unction from above

Is comfort, life, and fire of love.

Enable with perpetual light

The dullness of our blinded spirit;

Anoint and cheer our soiled face.

With the abundance of Thy grace;

Keep far our foes, give peace at home;

Where Thou are Guide no ill can come.

Teach us to know the Father, Son,

And Thee of both to be but ONE;

Praise be to Thee, O Lord of Hosts,

The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

(The candidate and wife will kneel at the altar and remain kneeling until the closing prayer and benediction.)

PRAYER:

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who of Your infinite love and goodness toward us has given us Your only and dearly loved Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Redeemer, and the author of everlasting life; who, after He had perfected our redemption by His death and resurrection, and

was ascended into heaven, sent abroad into the world His apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, and pastors, by whose labor and ministry He gathered together multitudes in all parts of the world, to set forth the eternal praise of Your Holy Name. For these unspeakable benefits of Your eternal goodness, and since you have vouchsafed to call this Your servant here present to the same office and ministry appointed for the salvation of mankind, we render unto You most hearty thanks; we praise and worship You through Your dear Son, our Savior, and we humbly beseech You that our brother may ever continue to show forth Your praise. May he daily increase in knowledge and all goodness by the indwelling of Your Holy Spirit. Grant that through this Your minister, as well as through those over whom he shall be appointed to shepherd, Your Holy Name may be forever glorified and Your kingdom enlarged, through Your dear Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen

ORDINATION OF ELDERS

(Then the Bishop, or the Presiding Officer, with assisting Elders, laying their hands upon the head of the candidate shall say:)

The Lord pour upon you the Holy Spirit for the office and work of an Elder in the Church of God, now committed unto you by authority of the Church, through the imposition of our hands. Be a faithful dispenser of the Word of God, and of the Holy Sacraments, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(The ordinand and his wife shall rise. The Bishop shall hand the new Elder his Bible with these words:)

Receive this Bible, and with it the sacred charge to steadfastly preach and teach the Word of Life to the congregation.

(Then the Bishop shall hand the ordinand his license with these words:)

Receive also this license, granted by the National Conference, as a further testimony to the authority of the holy office of an Elder.

Scripture – Matthew 28:18-20

“Then Jesus came to them and said, ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.’”

PRAYER:

Most merciful Father, we beseech You to impart unto this Your servant the riches of Your grace, and the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit; that with clearness of discernment and readiness of utterance, he may declare unto all to whom he is sent the whole counsel of God. Through his ministrations the Church may be quickened and moved to higher attainments in Godliness and the lost be converted and gathered into the fold of Christ. Grant that in all things he may seek Your glory alone, and the increase of Your kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

O merciful Father, our hope is in You. Fill us with Your gracious presence and favor in all our lot, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in You, we may worthily glory Your holy name, and finally by Your mercy inherit eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

BENEDICTION

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.