

INSTALLATION OF A LOCAL CHURCH PASTOR

Order for the Institution of a Local Minister subsequent to his assignment to a local congregation by Conference

(At the time appointed in a Service of Worship, the Bishop, or his designated representative shall address the people):

Beloved in Christ, we have assembled here this (day) for the purpose of instituting our esteemed brother, the Rev. _____, as Pastor of this Church (Charge). We believe that his assignment to this congregation is of the Holy Spirit, and we further now seek His blessing, and His grace –

Let us pray: Almighty God our Heavenly Father, in every age you have chosen servants to speak your Word, and to lead your people. We thank you for _____ our brother, called by you and set apart by the Evangelical Congregational Church, and by your guidance assigned to _____ Church as Pastor. Of your goodness O Lord, give him the Shepherd's heart, the Prophet's voice, and the Leader's hand of authority and compassion as he assumes his responsibilities here. May he be true and faithful to you and to his people. Fill him with your Spirit, that he may have the same mind that is in Christ Jesus, in whose Name we pray, Amen.

Then shall the Presiding Minister address the candidate thusly:

Do you solemnly promise that by the assistance of the grace of God, you will endeavor to faithfully discharge the duties which may fall to you as Pastor of this (these) congregation(s), and will you promise to be careful to maintain a Godly example of life before God and man, and to otherwise conform to your vows of ordination?

If so, answer: I DO SO PROMISE, THE LORD BEING MY HELPER.

Then the congregation shall be addressed as follows:

Do you promise to care for him and his family as your own, and to express concerns and even necessary criticism in a manner becoming people who belong to Jesus Christ?

If so, answer: WE DO SO PROMISE, THE LORD BEING OUR HELPER.

THE PRESENTATIONS:

The Presiding Minister shall present to the candidate his Bible:

_____, receive your Bible, the inerrant source of faith and practice.

A personal friend and ministerial colleague shall present the candidate with a copy of the DISCIPLINE:

_____, receive our Discipline, the statement of faith and polity by which we work for the Kingdom.

The President of the Official Board or Ministry Council shall present a copy of the congregational by-laws, mission statement, and other related materials.

_____, receive these documents as our mutual guides as we labor together.

Then shall the President of the Trustees, or representative thereof present the keys to the Church:

_____, receive the keys to our Church, and may the doors always be open to those who need and love Jesus.

Then shall the President of the Stewards or representative thereof symbolically present bread and grape juice:

_____, receive these elements as symbols of our Savior's body and blood, reminders of His eternal and sacrificial love, and that we are one body.

The Candidate's Prayer. Then shall the candidate pray using free prayer, or he may use the following:

O Lord my God, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; yet you have called your servant to stand in your house, and to serve at your altar. To you and to your service I devote myself,

body, soul, and spirit. Fill my memory with the record of your mighty works; enlighten my understanding with the light of your Holy Spirit; and may all the desires of my heart and will center in what you would have me do. Make me an instrument of your salvation for the people entrusted to my care, and grant that I may faithfully administer your Holy Sacraments, and by my life and teaching set forth your true and living Word. Be always with me in carrying out the duties of my ministry. In prayer, quicken my devotion; in praises, heighten my love and gratitude; in preaching, give me readiness of thought and expression; and grant that, by the clearness and brightness of your holy Word, all the world may be drawn into your blessed kingdom. All this I ask for the sake of your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Then shall the Presiding Minister make declaration of the institution as follows:

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Head of the Church, and by the authority of the Evangelical Congregational Church, I do pronounce and declare that the Rev. _____, is duly constituted the pastor of this (these) congregation(s). Let us therefore pray, beloved unto God, the Fountain of all grace and glory, that He may be pleased to sanctify with His Heavenly Blessing this relation of pastor and people which has now in His Name been established:

Free prayer, or the following may be used:

Almighty and everlasting God, our Heavenly Father, we thank You for your goodness to us this (day) in establishing this pastorate, and we ask You to continue your loving kindness to this congregation, and to your servant, _____, who has now been set over them in holy things. Bless him in full measure with the gifts of your spirit that he may truly and effectively preach your Gospel. So endue him with purity of life that he may be above reproach as an example to his flock, and grant that in all things he may faithfully serve you in the conversion of sinners to you, in the up building of your people in holiness, and in the leadership of your church for the accomplishment of your purpose of salvation in Jesus. And we pray, O Lord God, that you would visit this congregation with your love and favor. Prepare their hearts to receive your Holy Word, increase in them true faith and holy living, and of your great mercy keep them in the unity of spirit and the bonds of love. We ask all these things in the name and for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Service of Institution ends with the benediction pronounced by the new pastor, preceded or followed by the singing of an appropriate rousing hymn of consecration.