

HINTS, SUGGESTIONS, GUIDELINES FOR HOSTING INSTALLATIONS & ORDINATIONS

Congratulations: Your congregation has found a new pastor or you have just received a call. Both of these situations are causes for celebration. So pat yourself on the back and prepare to have a time of rejoicing.

Smooth celebrations require a little bit of planning ahead of time. This set of suggestions is designed to help you make the most of your big occasion.

Ordination to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament and installation as a pastor in a congregation are acts of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

DECENCY AND ORDER: W-4.4000 sets the basic rules for ordinations and installations.

1. The ordination of candidates to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament shall ordinarily take place in the presence of the congregation in which the candidate is a member, and in the place for the regular worship of that congregation.
2. A service of installation shall be held by the presbytery within whose bounds the candidate has been called to minister.
3. The installation of a minister as pastor or associate pastor of more than one church may take place in a joint service, provided each church is present and answers for itself the constitutional questions set forth in W-4.4006b
4. The presbytery or commission appointed by the presbytery for this purpose shall convene and shall call the congregation to worship. The service shall focus upon Christ and the joy and responsibility of the mission and ministry of the church, and shall include a sermon appropriate to the occasion. The member named to preside shall state briefly the proceedings of the presbytery preparatory to the ordination/installation and shall point out its nature and importance.
5. The member presiding shall then ask the candidate or minister to be installed the constitutional questions.
6. The candidate, having answered the questions in the affirmative, shall kneel, if able, and the presbytery shall, with prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain the candidate to the office of the

minister of the Word and Sacrament. Previously ordained ministers stand, rather than kneel, for the laying on of hands.

7. Then the members of the presbytery, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the new minister into the ministry of the Word and Sacrament and/or the newly installed minister into the particular pastoral responsibility and into their fellowship in the ministry.

GETTING STARTED:

1. Presbytery approves the call of the pastor.

2. Setting a date:

- a. Check your church calendar and find more than one convenient date as soon as feasible after the work to which the individual is called begins.
- b. Call the presbytery moderator and find out which of the above dates is convenient to him or her. The moderator will preside, so the date needs to fit her or his schedule as well. Look in the presbytery directory for current moderator's name and contact information or call the presbytery office at (814) 742-2200.
- c. Call the presbytery office and check the date for major conflicts, and have the time put on the presbytery calendar.

3. Select members of the administrative commission:

- a. The commission needs to fit the guidelines spelled out below:
- b. Presiding member: The moderator of presbytery, who will be the one, on behalf of the presbytery, to ask the constitutional questions.
- c. Number: Not fewer than five members, preferably seven, but you may have more.
- d. Balances: Shall be composed of ruling and teaching elders in numbers as equal as possible.

Shall be composed of women and men in numbers as equal as possible.

Shall be no more than one elder from any one of presbytery's congregations

e. Additional members:

- (1) It is permissible to invite Presbyterian ministers or elders of other presbyteries to participate as corresponding members of the commission, or simply as participants in the worship service. These should be above the minimum of five from our presbytery. Please obtain the name of the presbytery of membership for ministers and congregation of membership for elders.
- (2) Ministers of other denominations: The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to initiate, maintain, and strengthen its relations to, and to engage in mission with, other Presbyterian and Reformed bodies and with other Christian churches, alliances, councils, and consortia. It is therefore appropriate and permissible to invite a minister member of another Christian denomination within your local community to participate as a corresponding member. If

you do, please obtain the name of the faith community in which the minister serves, for presbytery records, and please orient the minister to our denomination's ordination and installation practices so that he or she feels comfortable with and understands what is going on in the service.

<<Don't know anybody yet? Ask your clerk, or ask the C.O.M. chair or the presbytery office for suggestions. It is frequently convenient, but by no means required, to ask ministers and elders from nearby congregations >>

f. Report names of commission: Members of the commission must be approved by Committee on Ministry and presbytery (Presbytery may delegate authority to approve to C.O.M, but the authority to name the commission rests with presbytery/C.O.M., not the individual organizing the event.) Call COM chair, whose name can be found in presbytery directory or presbytery office at (814) 742-2200.

ORGANIZING THE EVENT

A. Invitations:

1. The presbytery is your partner in this event, so the presbytery should be invited. Invitations should be sent to the 49 congregations and the ministers of presbytery. The presbytery directory will have names and addresses, or call the presbytery office.
2. Your congregation should be invited.
3. This would be an excellent opportunity to welcome your neighborhood or other faith communities in your town. Your new session should be able to give you suggestions on those with whom your new congregation cooperates in local mission projects and on how to best communicate with your neighbors.
4. Invite as many more of your friends as you wish.
5. Invitations can be as simple as a flyer or as elaborate as your spirit moves.
6. It is always helpful to include a paragraph of directions and a map of how to locate your building.

B. Timing: No time is forbidden, but afternoons on weekends work best for those who have to travel.

C. Reception: Folks will have come from some distance to attend this event. They will want to congratulate you and wish you well. So plan on a reception afterward to enable them to celebrate with you. It can be a simple punch and cookies or a full meal—let your congregational chefs be your guide. One important caveat: we have folks in our presbytery with severe food allergies, particularly to nuts and gluten.

D. Expenses: Expenses of ordination and installation services in Huntingdon Presbytery are

borne by the particular church involved. The moderator of the session shall arrange for payment of such expenses, including those of participants, complying with the standards for such remuneration set by presbytery from time to time. (The standards are found in the pulpit supply appendix of the presbytery Manual.)

E. **Alerts:** Alert your church musician, your custodian, folks who provide for your parking needs, cooks & bakers, to the requirements of your special event so they too can be prepared for your big event.

SERVICE:

1. The minister or candidate to be installed plans and prepares the bulletins for the order of worship.

2. Liturgical resources:

For specific details, read the *Directory for Worship*, W-4.4000 on ordination procedures. Another helpful resource is the *Book of Occasional Services: A Liturgical Resource Supplementing the Book of Common Worship, 1993*, which was compiled by the Office of Theology and Worship for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (Geneva Press, 1999), which may be ordered from the Presbyterian Publishing House (800) 524-2612.

Presbytery office maintains a file of bulletins from past ordinations and installations.

While there is great flexibility in style of worship permitted within the guidelines, reading the *Directory for Worship* is very helpful because where the *Directory for Worship* says “shall” or “will”, the items are not optional, but are mandatory.

3. **Communion** is permissible, but not required. If you choose to observe the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, your session needs to approve it and needs to know who will be officiating at it.

4. **Offering:** Huntingdon Presbytery has approved the reception of an offering at every ordination and installation service, the proceeds of which go to the benefit of the Clergy Emergency Fund. This Fund has been established to provide financial support for ministers of presbytery and their families in meeting unexpected needs. Please include the offering in your order of worship and have ushers prepared to receive it. Alert your congregational treasurer to be ready to remit it to presbytery after the service.

5. **Order:** Include the constitutionally mandated parts of the service. The rest is up to you and your session.

6. **Child care:** Think about your probable need (or lack thereof) for child care and make provisions accordingly

CHECKING IT TWICE:

This is a good time to check with the church secretary and clerk, your musician and your reception organizer, the presbytery office, the moderator of presbytery and your sermon preacher to make sure they are all still on track. Make sure you have told all your commission members what time they should plan on arriving and how to find your church.

Dress: Let the members of your commission and participants know the expected dress for the event—i.e. robes or not. If some members will wear robes, all should be invited to wear robes.

Administrative Commission meeting: Your committee to ordain and/or install will need to have a brief meeting before the service. They will sign a form attesting to their accomplishment of the ordination or installation. Allocate a place for them to gather (and store their coats and garment bags, etc.) and be available to meet with them at least half an hour before the service. Make sure everyone has a bulletin and is familiar with the physical layout of the sanctuary, how to move about it, where they are to sit and stand. The moderator of presbytery will run this meeting, but you will be doing the explanation of the service.

Afterward

1. Encourage the moderator of the commission meeting to turn in the meeting minutes.
2. Ask your church treasurer to remit the offering to the presbytery Administrative Treasurer at the presbytery office.
3. Send the presbytery office a copy of the bulletin for our files

Now, pat yourself on the back and enjoy your new call!

Further questions: Call the presbytery staff

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