

# A Service of Ordination and/or Induction of a Minister of Word and Sacrament

## Introduction

It is important that, when we come to do certain things in the Church, such as ordain and induct people to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, we do not simply follow a liturgical form for the sake of tradition, but rather we understand what it is we are doing and, therefore, why we do things in a particular way.

In this regard, a service of ordination and/or induction of a Minister of Word and Sacrament will presume certain things (most of which may be found in Appendix D-3 and D-4 of the *Book of Order*):

1. Ordination is not the conferring of a personal status or privilege, but the setting apart of men and women to perform certain functions within the Church to the glory of God.”
2. The function in this case is to preach the Word, celebrate the sacraments, and share in the pastoral oversight of the household of God.
3. This function is regarded as being in continuity with the calling, responsibility and task accepted by the first apostles when the early Church was directed to the necessity of devoting themselves “to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42) – i.e., it is an apostolic ministry through which servant mission leadership is exercised.
4. In fulfilling this apostolic function, the Minister represents, proclaims and holds forth the One who is *the* Word and Sacrament, so that the Church’s life may be continually nourished and informed by this reality, not merely for its own sake, but for the sake of the world.
5. This apostolic role is customarily conferred through the laying on of hands by those who have themselves been set aside for this task which, in the Presbyterian tradition, means other Ministers of Word and Sacrament.
6. Ordination is an act of the Presbytery rather than the local congregation. Even though the support of a congregation is of critical importance to a ministry appointment, it is the Presbytery, not the congregation, which exercises both pastoral responsibility and, where necessary, discipline in relation to those Ministers of Word and Sacrament within its bounds.

7. Ordination does not take place without an induction or appointment to a particular charge within a faith community. Ordination, therefore, leads to induction, and induction presumes both the prior act of ordination and the context of a faith community that understands the centre of its life to be in Christ. One is ordained only once – for life; but one may be inducted several times.
8. Insofar as the Ministry of Word and Sacrament shares in and represents the ministry of its Lord, those who exercise this ministry are expected to have a personal relationship with Christ (which needs to be nurtured through such things as Bible study and a disciplined life of prayer) and model their ministry on that of Christ the Good Shepherd.
9. Ordination, as with baptism and Holy Communion, is not an act of the Presbyterian Church alone. What we do as Presbyterians should be consistent with the understanding, customs and forms of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of which we are part.

## Commentary

The service of worship within which the act of ordination and/or induction takes place should be celebratory and joyful, dignified, creative, and consistent with our heritage.

The service should include the following components:

1. *The presentation of the Ordinand/Minister to be inducted:* This provides an opportunity for all parties to acknowledge what is happening and to voice their approval. It can take place either near the beginning of the service (after a call to worship and greeting) or at the commencement of the ordination/ induction section of the liturgy.
2. *The Affirmation of Faith:* The recital of the Nicene or Apostles' Creed, following either the sermon or the Narrative (see below) allows for an appropriate confession of faith that goes beyond the particularities of our own setting and binds our actions to the activity and tradition of the Church universal.
3. *The Preamble:* The Moderator of Presbytery, who will normally be the one presiding over the service, talks briefly about the theological rationale and meaning of the act that is about to take place. In the case of ordination, this Preamble serves to remind the Ordinand and all others present of the dignity and importance of the office to which the Ordinand is called and to encourage him/her to live a life that is appropriate to this calling.
4. *The Narrative:* This is a brief explanation of the process that has led to the ordination and/or induction. It is usually delivered by the Convener MSB of the Board of Nomination. It is not a time for thanking various people or sharing anecdotes; the appropriate time for this is during the speeches after the service.
5. *The Vows:* These usually take the form of the Ordinand or Minister to be inducted answering a series of questions. For the Ordinand, the focus of the vows is on declaring his/her faith in God and intention to undertake the ministry of Word and Sacrament. For the Minister to be inducted, the focus of the vows is on declaring his/her faith in God and acceptance of the call that is the occasion for this service.
6. *The Formula:* The Clerk of Presbytery reads the Formula, which the Ordinand or Minister to be inducted then signs.
7. *The Ordination/Induction Prayer:* The congregation stands. If it is an ordination, the Ordinand kneels and is surrounded by all ministers of

Word and Sacrament present, who join together in the laying on of hands at the right moment in the prayer. If the Moderator presiding over the service is not a Minister of Word and Sacrament, the ordination prayer and the laying on of hands will be led by a presiding Minister, appointed by Presbytery for the occasion, who will also declare the Ordinand to be ordained and lead the offering of the right hand of fellowship. The prayer might begin with an invitation for the people to pray in silence. After a suitable time of silence, the spoken part of the prayer should include (1) an expression of wonder and praise for the mystery of the Gospel and the Church, (2) an expression of reliance upon the Holy Spirit, (3) an expression of the hope that this ministry will be faithful to the call by which it is being established. It should be prayed through Jesus Christ, who is our Brother in prayer and Mediator of worship.

8. *The Declaration*: This is pronounced by the Moderator. It may be preceded or followed by the Aaronic (or some other appropriate) Blessing.
9. *Welcome by the Presbytery*: The Moderator invites members of the Presbytery to come forward and give the newly-inducted minister the right hand of fellowship. If, as has become the practice in many ordination and induction services nowadays, the members of Presbytery are followed by members of the Session or Parish Council (and, in some cases, members of the congregation, family and friends), then this act of welcome should come after the Questions to the People.
10. *Congregational Response*: As they respond to questions that are put to them by the Moderator, the congregation have the opportunity to declare their acceptance of the newly inducted Minister as their pastor and leader and to reaffirm their commitment to the life, worship and mission of the Church. These questions can be put following either the Declaration or the Vows.
11. *Symbols of Ministry*: At this stage of the service, some congregations like to present symbols of ministry to their new minister. As a minimum, the two aspects of ministry that should be represented are: sacrament and preaching. Sometimes symbols for pastoral care and mission are included. Symbols are meant to speak of the nature of the call and the aspirations of the people. When the symbols are presented, a brief description of the symbol, and brief explanation of what it stands for, and an expression of hope that this part of the ministry be faithfully executed, can be given.

## **A Suggested Order of Worship for Ordination and Induction**

*The following order of worship may be tailored to suit an Induction service by deleting and/or modifying those phrases and sections that refer specifically to ordination*

### **Welcome & Greeting** (Moderator of Presbytery)

#### **A Statement of Purpose**

Moderator: We come to worship God, meeting as a Presbytery to ordain «Full\_Name» by prayer and the laying on of hands to the ministry of Word and Sacrament, and to induct «HerHim» as the minister of this congregation

#### **The Presentation of the Minister to be Ordained and Inducted**

*The Convener MSB and the Session Clerk bring the Ordinand forward to the Moderator.*

«Convener\_MSBB» Moderator, I bring «Full\_Name» to be ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

Session Clerk Moderator, on behalf of the people of this parish I ask that «Full\_Name» be inducted as our minister.

Moderator (to congregation)

Do you, the people of this parish, desire that «Full\_Name» be inducted as your Minister?

Congregation ***We do. To God be the glory.***

#### **The Call to Worship**

E te whanau a te Karaiti,  
there are different gifts,  
***but it is the same Spirit who gives them.***  
There are different ways of serving God,  
***but it is the same Lord who is served.***  
God works through different people in different ways,  
***but it is the same God who achieves glory through them all.***  
Each one is given a gift by the Spirit,  
***to use it for the common good.***

Let us worship God.

#### **Hymn/Song**

## Opening Prayer

## Bible Readings

## Sermon

## Hymn/Song

## The Preamble

*Moderator* In an act of fire and love,  
the Spirit of God came upon a people of flesh and blood.  
In wind and word,  
they became the Church of the risen Jesus Christ.  
By God's hand  
some became prophets to speak the truth;  
some became teachers, instructing old and young;  
some received gifts of prayer, holding a world of need  
before the gaze of God;  
some received the power to hope and to see a vision;  
some received the greatest gift – the capacity to love.

God blessed it all,  
and under the life of Christ made it into one unified  
body.

In Christ they lived as one,  
in Christ they moved as one,  
in Christ they found their one reconciled being.

As then, so now.

Still the fire,  
still the love,  
still the gifts,  
and still the life.

This day, in this place,  
God calls a people to be the Church.

Amid unique needs, singular challenges, and unrepeatable  
days,

God reforms and recreates us.

Amid shifting shapes, and moving boundaries,  
God calls a people once again, to be one in Christ.

Within this people there are those who are called to break  
bread,

and to baptize the children of God.

They are appointed to preach the Word,  
and to look for the signs of God's coming reign.

They are to encourage participation in God's mission.

They are to be leaders.

They are to be servants.

They are to play their part in God's body,  
as if God was their very life – as God most  
surely is.

Ministers of Word and Sacrament are part of God's care  
for the life of the Church.

That is why we have seen fit to ensure  
that this congregation has a Minister in its midst.

I call upon the Convener of the Ministry Settlement Board,  
«Nominator»  
to tell how «First\_Name» came to be called  
to be a Minister of Word and Sacrament in this place  
and among this people.

### **The Narrative «Nominator»**

### **The Act of Faith**

*Moderator* This ordination and induction, within the community of the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand, is an act of Christian faith. Our Church believes the supreme rule of faith is the Word of God, contained in the Old and New Testaments. We believe that our subordinate standards of faith, the Westminster Confession, the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, point towards the faith to which we are all called. We understand that we have liberty of opinion on matters not central to the Faith of our Church. We believe that God's Spirit guides our understanding and leads us in the ways of service, unity and truth.

Let us proclaim the Faith we have received and share with all Christians, by standing and saying the (Apostles' or Nicene) Creed . . .

### **The Vows**

*Moderator* «Full\_Name», in the name of Jesus Christ, the only Head of the Church,  
we are here to ordain you as a Minister of Word and Sacrament by prayer and the laying on of hands.

In this act, the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa New Zealand acts and speaks within the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, which is represented in the Creed we have just affirmed together.

The Ministry of Word and Sacrament is an apostolic ministry. Through it the Church is reminded and encouraged to fulfil its calling in Jesus Christ.

He is the One upon whom you will rely;

He is the One whom you will serve;

He is the one whom you will proclaim.

Therefore, that we may know that you desire to receive this ministry of Christ through the gift of the Holy Spirit, we ask you these questions:

Do you confess Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord?

***I do.***

Do you believe that you are called by God and the Church to the ministry of Word and Sacrament?

***I do.***

Do you receive the witness of the holy scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the supreme rule of faith and life, and do you undertake to preach from them to make Jesus Christ known?

***I do.***

Do you resolve to celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion with the people of God?

***I do.***

Do you accept the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as witnessing to the core faith of the holy catholic Church, and do you accept the Westminster documents as a witness to the Reformed tradition of faith?

***I do.***

Relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, will you commit yourself to the study of the Bible; seek to model your life and ministry on Christ; and be faithful in prayer?

***With God's help, I will.***

Do you promise to share in the life and work of the Presbytery and the courts of the Church to uphold the doctrine, worship, government and discipline of the Church, and at all times seek its unity and peace?

***I do.***

Do you accept the call to be Minister to this parish and congregation?



***I do; and I intend, with God's help, to grow into the role of faithful pastor, servant leader, and minister of the Gospel.***

***Congregation Faithful is God who has called you, and who will not fail you.***

**Alternative vows (for Induction only):**

*Moderator* «First\_Name», in view of this declaration of faith, and within the life of this congregation, whom you are called to serve as Minister of Word and Sacrament, you are now required openly to declare your faith in God.

*Inductee* I gladly confess my faith in the triune God of grace;  
and I wholeheartedly reaffirm my trust in Jesus Christ,  
my Saviour and Lord.

I readily receive the witness to Jesus Christ  
in the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments,  
and in the Subordinate Standards of the  
Presbyterian Church.

As one whose ministry is exercised in the Presbyterian Church, I accept the oversight of this Presbytery, and undertake to share in the life and witness of the wider Church that this Presbytery represents.

I look forward with joy to serving the people of this parish and congregation, strengthening them in their faith, and encouraging them in mission.

**The Formula is read (by the Clerk of Presbytery) and signed**

**The Prayer of Ordination and Induction**

*Members of Presbytery are present gather around the Ordinand.*

*Moderator* Let us pray.

We give thanks for this occasion that draws us together tonight.

A new ministry, a fresh perspective, a climate of anticipation.

We offer you thanks, indeed, O God,

that in your great wisdom and mercy,  
you gather us together –

an ordinary yet diverse group of people –

and call us church, your body,

the branches of your vine, your beloved.

Your church is a great mystery, Lord.  
An institution with a chequered history; an organisation  
internally divided.  
Yet a mystery of your making, a chaos of uncalculating love,  
a place where gifts are discovered and released,  
a sign of hope and reconciliation.  
So we live in this tension.  
And ministry is exercised in the tension  
between calling and actuality,  
between already and not yet,  
between obedience and disobedience  
– a tension where the energies of grace are relied  
upon  
and the lessons of grace are learned.  
We thank you, Lord,  
for the processes of discernment and formation  
that have led to this ordination,  
and ask that your Spirit might rest upon  
«First\_Name»,

*for ordination, the laying on of hands takes place at this point)*

blessing «HerHim» and equipping «HerHim» for the ministry  
of Word and Sacrament to which he/she has been called.

We thank you for «First\_Name»'s willingness to exercise  
ministry in this place,  
to keep, through word and sacrament,  
the Gospel at the centre of this congregation's life,  
to exercise a ministry of care and encouragement in  
the faith,  
to commit him/herself to prayer and study of the scriptures,  
to build up the body of Christ.

We thank you for the living heritage of faith that resides in  
this place,  
the rich history of prayer and worship,  
the variety of gifts and ministries,  
and the countless acts of faithful service.  
May this ministry that commences this evening,  
find strength and inspiration in the life and ministry of  
Christ,  
energy and purpose in the activity of the Spirit.  
These things we pray in the name of the One in whose name  
all ministries are exercised – Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**An alternative prayer (for Induction only)**

*Moderator* Almighty God, in every age you have chosen servants to speak your word and lead your people. We thank you for «Full\_Name» whom you have called to serve you. Fill «HerHim» with the Holy Spirit and give «HerHim» the gifts for ministry in this place. May «SheHe» have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus, and be a faithful disciple, being an example to others; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **The Declaration**

*Moderator* «First\_Name», I declare you to be ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament and inducted to the pastoral charge of this parish in order to centre its life in worship and encourage its people in mission. In acknowledgement of this we sing God's blessing upon you.

**The Aaronic blessing (sung):**  
***The Lord bless you and keep you;***  
***the Lord make his face to shine upon you,***  
***and be gracious unto you;***  
***the Lord lift up his countenance upon you,***  
***and give you peace.***

*Presbytery Members followed by the Session-Parish Council greet the newly ordained and inducted Minister.*

## **Congregational Response**

*Session Clerk* «First\_Name», we welcome you to this parish. We share with you in the ministry and mission of Christ, seeking to make him known in all that we do. We offer you our friendship and support as we join together in this work to which God has called us.

*Moderator (to the congregation)*

In your calling as a congregation, will you take regular part in the worship of God, and contribute to the work of God as you are able; will you endeavour to make Jesus Christ known in the community by word and action?

*Congregation* ***We will, the Lord being our helper.***

*Moderator (to the congregation)*

Will you honour «First\_Name» as your pastor and leader;  
will you listen for God's Word in «HerHis» preaching;  
will you welcome «HerHim» into your homes;  
will you provide for «HerHim» all that is necessary for  
«HerHis» physical welfare;  
and will you support «HerHim» with your love and prayers?

*Congregation* **We will, the Lord being our helper.**

## Hymn/Song

### The symbols of ministry

*A group of people comes forward, representing the congregation, bearing the symbols of ministry: Bible, water, bread & wine.*

«Person\_1» Receive this Bible. We are a people of the Word, and we look to you to deepen our engagement with the Word that shapes us and sustains us.

*Moderator* Jesus said, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation."

«First\_Name», will you study and proclaim these scriptures, always striving to discern what God is saying and seeking to be faithful in your teaching?  
**I will, by the grace of God.**

«Person\_2» Receive this water. We are a people born through the waters of baptism, and we look to you to baptise our children and newcomers to the faith.

*Moderator* Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

«First\_Name», will you administer the sacrament of baptism in this parish?  
**I will, by the grace of God.**

«Person\_3» Receive this bread and wine. We are a people who meet Christ at his Table, and we look to you to keep Jesus before us in all that we say and do.

*Moderator* Jesus said, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

«First\_Name», will you celebrate the Lord's Supper with God's family in this parish?

**I will, by the grace of God.**

«Person\_4» Receive this roll of membership. As a consequence of the ministry of Word and Sacrament we look to you to uphold us in prayer and pastoral care.

*Moderator* The apostle Peter said, "Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not by constraint but willingly, not as domineering over those in your charge, but being an example to the flock."

«First\_Name», will you exercise pastoral care to this people?

**I will, by the grace of God.**

**Prayers of Intercession** (concluding with the Lord's Prayer)

**Hymn/Song**

**Benediction**