

## **ADAPTED ORDER FOR ORDINATION TO MINISTRY – 2018**

### **ACCOMPANIMENT DOCUMENT TO BOOK OF WORSHIP: UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST<sup>1</sup>**

#### **Introduction**

In this order the people of God celebrate Christ's gift of ministry to the church. In planning the service, set the time so that people from other local churches within the association, representatives of other Christian communions, and guests from synagogues or other communities of faith may participate. Services of ordination held on Sunday mornings prohibit the enrichment afforded by this participation.

Representatives of the association committee on the ministry, in full consultation with the ordinand and the local church where the service will be held, plan the service of ordination. The conference may be represented in the planning. Lay and ordained people are encouraged to share in the leadership of the service. The local church representative is a leader from the local church of membership which supported the ordinand through their Member in Discernment process. The association representative is a leader from the association's committee on ministry which oversaw the ordinand's Member in Discernment process.

If a service of installation is taking place at the same time, leadership representatives change as the service continues. The local church of ordination is the ordinand's home church; the local church of installation is the calling body. Association representatives indicated are representatives of the association in which the appropriate local church has its standing.

This order may be incorporated within a Service of Word and Sacrament or within a Service of the Word. The installation of the pastor may immediately follow the order for ordination. It is fitting that a sermon be preached concerning the ministry of all people of God and the particular ministry of those ordained in and on behalf of the church. The service may be enriched by the generous use of music. Plans should be made in consultation with the music leaders of the local church.

The ordinand may sit with the congregation until requested to come forward.

#### **Outline**

*The order which follows may stand alone, or be combined with The Order for Installation of a Pastor. This order may also be incorporated into a Service of Word and Sacrament or a Service of the Word. When incorporated into a larger service, it will ordinarily follow the sermon. The greeting may be used at the opening of the service rather than at the opening of this order.*

---

<sup>1</sup> Local Church Ministries, United Church of Christ. *Book of Worship: United Church of Christ*. Cleveland, OH 2012.

- **Introduction to the Occasion** (*printed in the worship bulletin*)
- **Greeting**
- **Presentation**
- **Exhortation**
- **Examination**
- **Acclamation**
- **Laying on of Hands**
- **Declaration**

### **Introduction to the Occasion:**

### **Understanding Ordination in the United Church of Christ**

*(Printed in the worship bulletin)*

Friends, we welcome all to this celebration of the ordination of \_\_\_\_\_ to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in the United Church of Christ. We offer a few words as context for the ritual in which we are about to engage, so that all may enter fully.

The United Church of Christ believes that God calls every Christian to be a servant of God, a minister, living and serving in Christ's name. This call is celebrated sacramentally in Baptism as persons are claimed for Christ by the Holy Spirit and the church. All who are baptized spend the rest of their lives responding to God's call and claim, as God's love is shown in word and deed.

Christians are members of the Body of Christ, the church, under the sole headship of Jesus Christ. This is a living body<sup>2</sup> – called, formed, and sent into the world by the power of the Holy Spirit. The church is a covenantal community partaking in the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. Members belong to God in Jesus Christ and therefore to one another in Jesus' name.

The church acknowledges that its members have many diverse ministries in the world and in the church. It also recognizes a specific need for representative servant leaders to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the Body of Christ.<sup>3</sup>

The United Church of Christ, recognizing the tradition of the church universal throughout the ages and throughout the world, affirms God's call to some individuals to be such leaders who help the

---

<sup>2</sup> 1 Corinthians 12

<sup>3</sup> Ephesians 4:12

church to be what God intends it to be. These persons are set apart through prayer and the laying on of hands in the rite of ordination.

Relying on the Holy Spirit, ordained ministers enter the apostolic ministry continuing the witness of Christ's followers from New Testament times. They bear particular authority and particular responsibility for the proclamation and practice of the Christian faith and for the life of the church itself. They vow to serve and to lead as persons of faith claimed by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and committed to the church and its ministry.

## Greeting

*The moderator or another representative of the association may greet the people, and they may respond in these or similar words.*

### ***Association Representative***

Grace to you and peace from God, who is and who was and who is to come, and from Jesus Christ the faithful witness and the sovereign of the rulers on earth.<sup>4</sup>

The \_\_\_\_\_ Association of the \_\_\_\_\_ Conference of the United Church of Christ greets you in the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church.

### ***People***

**To God, who by the power at work within us is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or imagine, be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.**<sup>5</sup>

## Presentation

*A representative of the local church that is requesting the ordination may address a representative of the association in these or similar words. The ordinand's full name may be used in the first reference. Thereafter, the first name only may be used.*

### ***Local Church Representative (addressing the association representative)***

\_\_\_\_\_ United Church of Christ, after carefully considering the call to ordained ministry of \_\_\_\_\_, respectfully requests that the \_\_\_\_\_ Association ordain \_\_\_\_\_ to the ministry of the church of Jesus Christ, consistent with scripture and with the traditions of the church universal, and according to the polity of the United Church of Christ.

<sup>4</sup> Revelation 1:4,5 adapted.

<sup>5</sup> Ephesians 3:20-21, adapted.

***Association Representative (addressing the congregation)***

The \_\_\_\_\_ Association has reviewed the request of local church United Church of Christ. We have prayerfully examined \_\_\_\_\_ concerning their fitness for ministry in Christ's church. We are pleased, on behalf of the United Church of Christ, to authorize the ordination of \_\_\_\_\_ into the Christian ministry.

*(addressing the ordinand)*

\_\_\_\_\_, servant of God, we invite you to come forward as a sign of your consent to receive ordination into Christian ministry.

*The ordinand may leave their place in the congregation and may stand, if able, at the chancel before the representative(s) of the association.*

**Exhortation*****Association Representative***

As today you come to answer the call of God and your church to lead people in their discipleship, worship and mission as the living Body of Christ, consider well the nature and significance of ordained ministry. The first ministers were apostles sent out by Jesus Christ. From the times of Paul and Junia<sup>6</sup> and the Ethiopian eunuch<sup>7</sup> some have been called and affirmed for ministry and leadership in the church. Through the centuries, the Body of Christ has continued to recognize and bless leaders asking them to take vows of ordination that their leadership in and on behalf of the community might accompany authority with service. Ordination, therefore, is a most solemn and ancient rite conferring the responsibility and accountability of leadership: to serve the Church, to preach the good news of Jesus Christ, to administer the Sacraments, to pray with and for the people, to nurture and instruct, counsel and guide. Ordained ministers are to live lives worthy of their calling, working in unity with all Christians, witnessing to the unity of the church,

---

<sup>6</sup> Romans 16:7

<sup>7</sup> Acts 8:21-40

cooperating with colleagues in ministry throughout the United Church of Christ and with the ecumenical church.

Ordained ministers are to conduct themselves that their lives may be shaped by Jesus Christ with the help of the Holy Spirit and that they may continually renew the gift of God that is in them to make known to all people the Gospel of the grace of God.

*A representative of the association or other worship leader may read a selection of these or similar scripture passages.*

## **A**

### ***Association Representative or Worship Leader***

Hear these words from the prophet Isaiah:

*I heard the voice of the Holy One saying,  
Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"  
Then I said, "Here I am! Send me!"<sup>8</sup>*

*How wonderful it is to see a messenger coming across the mountains,  
bringing good news, the news of peace!  
The messenger announces victory and says to Zion,  
"Your God reigns."<sup>9</sup>*

*The Spirit of God is upon me,  
because the Holy One has anointed me to bring good news to the poor,  
heal the brokenhearted,  
proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and freedom to those who are bound.<sup>10</sup>*

## **B**

### ***Association Representative or Worship Leader***

Hear these words from the apostle Paul:

*How can people call on someone they don't have faith in?  
And how can they have faith in someone they haven't heard of?  
And how can they hear without a preacher?*

<sup>8</sup> Isaiah 6:8, adapted.

<sup>9</sup> Isaiah 52:7-8, *Good News Bible*, adapted.

<sup>10</sup> Isaiah 61:1, adapted.

*And how can they preach unless they are sent? <sup>11</sup>*

and from Jesus Christ to his first disciples:

*Follow me, and I will make you fish for people. <sup>12</sup>*

## C

### ***Association Representative or Worship Leader***

Hear these words from the apostle Paul:

*The gifts Christ gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ. <sup>13</sup>*

And from Jesus Christ to the first disciples:

*You know that the rulers of the Gentiles dominate them, and their great leaders exercise authority over them.*

*It shall not be so among you;*

*but whoever would be great among you must be your servant. <sup>14</sup>*

and

*So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. <sup>15</sup>*

## **Examination**

*A representative of the association may then ask the ordinand the following questions, referencing The Marks of Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers of the United Church of Christ.*

### ***Association Representative***

\_\_\_\_\_, before God and this congregation, we ask you:

After prayerful discernment by yourself and in community,  
are you persuaded that God has called you to be an ordained minister  
of the Church of Jesus Christ,  
and are you ready with the help of God  
to enter this ministry and to serve faithfully in it?

<sup>11</sup> Romans 10:14-15, Common English Bible

<sup>12</sup> Mark 1: 17, New Revised Standard Version

<sup>13</sup> Ephesians 4: 11-12, *New Testament and Psalms: An Inclusive Version*

<sup>14</sup> Matthew 20:26-27

<sup>15</sup> John 13: 14-15

***Ordinand***

I am.

***Association Representative***

Do you, with the Church throughout the world,  
hear the word of God in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments,  
and do you accept the word of God as the rule of Christian faith and practice?

***Ordinand***

I do.

***Association Representative***

Do you accept the polity of the United Church of Christ,  
including the UCC Ministerial Code;  
and will you, as an ordained minister in this communion,  
reach out ecumenically toward all who are in Christ  
and show Christian love and respect  
to people of other faiths and people of no faith?

***Ordinand***

I do and I will, relying on God's grace.

***Association Representative***

Do you promise to be diligent in your private prayer,  
to be open to the continuing revelation of God in scripture,  
and to seek the Spirit at work in the signs of the times?

***Ordinand***

I do, relying on God's grace.

***Association Representative***

Will you be faithful in preaching and teaching the Gospel,  
and in administering the sacraments and rites of the church?

***Ordinand***

I will, relying on God's grace.

***Association Representative***

Will you seek to regard all people with equal love and concern  
and undertake to minister impartially to the needs of all?  
Will you be faithful in exercising pastoral care and leadership, and  
will you be responsible in keeping confidences shared with you?

***Ordinand***

I will, relying on God's grace.

***Association Representative***

Will you be zealous in maintaining both the truth of the Gospel  
and the peace of the Church,  
speaking the truth in love?

***Ordinand***

I will, relying on God's grace.

***Association Representative***

Will you responsibly steward, for the sake of God's future, the resources the Church  
entrusts to you?

***Ordinand***

I will, relying on God's grace.

***Association Representative***

Will you care for all of creation, striving to steward with justice the earth and its resources,  
and to heal the broken places?

***Ordinand***

I will, relying on God's grace.

***Association Representative***

Will you exercise wisdom and courage in carrying out public duties,  
witnessing and working for God's justice and mercy  
in each situation?

***Ordinand***

I will, relying on God's grace.

**Acclamation**

*Those official delegates of the association (clergy and others so designated) who are able may stand.*

***Association Representative (addressing the members of the Association)***

People of God, you have heard the promises \_\_\_\_\_ has made.  
What is your will?

**A*****Association Members***

By the grace of God, we affirm \_\_\_\_\_ called and ready!  
Let us ordain \_\_\_\_\_. Come, Holy Spirit.

**B*****Association Members***

By the grace of God, we affirm \_\_\_\_\_ worthy!  
Let us ordain \_\_\_\_\_. Come, Holy Spirit.

***Association Representative***

Will you support \_\_\_\_\_ in the ministry of Christ?

***Association Members***

We will.

*The people may show their approval and support by applause, a hymn, or some other means.*

**Laying On Of Hands**

*The ordinand may kneel, if able. A leader may invite forward those who are to share in the laying on of hands. This group may include, depending on local custom, the congregation. "Veni Creator, Spiritus" or another hymn may be sung by the choir alone or with the congregation.*

***Association Representative***

The laying on of hands is the traditional act of prayer through which the church in every age asks the Holy Spirit to confer on people who are called to ordained ministry the gifts they will need to serve.

*Those who have come forward to lay on hands may now do so. Silence may be observed. Then an association representative may lead in prayer.*

**A*****Association Representative***

Let us pray, calling upon the Holy Spirit to accomplish this sacred rite:

Come, Holy Spirit!

Be present among your church gathered here as we  
authorize \_\_\_\_\_ to preach your Word,  
administer the Sacraments,  
and serve your people as pastor and teacher.

Come, Holy Spirit!

***People*****Come, Holy Spirit!*****Association Representative***

Come, Lover of the Poor,  
 Advocate for Justice,  
 Comforter in Sorrow,  
 Fresh Wind of Change:\*  
 Come, Holy Spirit!

***People*****Come, Holy Spirit!**

*\*add other attributes of the Spirit to this brief litany*

***Association Representative***

Bestow on \_\_\_\_\_ your wisdom, your courage, your power.  
 Come, Holy Spirit!

***People*****Come, Holy Spirit!*****Association Representative***

Let the same mind be in \_\_\_\_\_ that was also in Christ Jesus.  
 Enable \_\_\_\_\_ to nourish your people in the faith of the gospel.  
 Come, Holy Spirit!

***People*****Come, Holy Spirit!*****Association Representative***

Fill \_\_\_\_\_ speech with truth and \_\_\_\_\_ life with integrity.  
 Come, Holy Spirit!

***People*****Come, Holy Spirit!*****Association Representative***

Increase the faith of \_\_\_\_\_,  
 strengthen \_\_\_\_\_ in the day of trouble,  
 prosper \_\_\_\_\_ words and works  
 that your justice may be known and your goodness celebrated.  
 Come, Holy Spirit!

*People*

**Come, Holy Spirit!**

*Association Representative*

In \_\_\_\_\_ ordination today, O God,  
may your name may be glorified and your truth exalted;  
through Jesus Christ our Sovereign and Savior.

*People*

**Amen.**

**Thanks be to God!**

**B***Association Representative*

Let us pray.

Eternal God, in wisdom you govern all things,  
and from the beginning you have chosen faithful people  
to serve you in ministry, and to build up the body of Christ.<sup>16</sup>

Now bless and sanctify by your Holy Spirit your servant \_\_\_\_\_,  
whom we, in your name and in obedience to your will,  
by prayer and with the laying on of hands,  
ordain to the ministry of the church,  
committing to \_\_\_\_\_ the authority to preach your word,  
administer the sacraments,  
and exercise the responsibilities of pastor and teacher.

Bestow on \_\_\_\_\_ the power of your Holy Spirit,  
confirming what we do.

Let the same mind be in \_\_\_\_\_ that was also in Christ Jesus.

Enable \_\_\_\_\_ to nourish your people in the faith of the gospel.

Fill \_\_\_\_\_ speech with truth and \_\_\_\_\_ life with integrity.

Increase the faith of \_\_\_\_\_ in you,  
strengthen \_\_\_\_\_ in the day of trouble,  
prosper \_\_\_\_\_ words and works  
that your name may be glorified and your truth exalted;  
through Jesus Christ our Sovereign and Savior.

---

<sup>16</sup> Ephesians 4:12

## Declaration

*The newly ordained minister may rise.*

### ***Association Representative***

In the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the church, and by the authority of the \_\_\_\_\_ Association of the \_\_\_\_\_ Conference of the United Church of Christ, I declare you to be ordained into the ministry of Jesus Christ.

### ***Representative Of The Local Church***

*A stole may be presented to the newly ordained minister with these or other words.*

Today we have prayed to God for your ministry.

We will continue to pray for you, as you pray  
for the church the Holy Spirit calls into being.

Partnership with God means  
working for something we do not fully know  
and of which we will not see the end.

We are not our own.

yet in each generation, we make the faith our own.<sup>17</sup>

As some things pass away  
and new things are foretold  
let us be the church

known for joy and hope and intention.

Together let us teach, invite, and embody  
Christ's wisdom,

so that all that has come before  
and all that will come hereafter  
will be for God's good and worthy purposes.

*A Bible may be presented to the newly ordained minister with these or other words.*

### ***Association Representative***

Receive at our hands this Bible of which you are appointed as an interpreter.

Be diligent in the study of its message  
that you may speak with the authority of truth,  
and be a faithful minister of Word and Sacrament.

*A certificate of ordination along with the UCC Ministerial Code may be presented, and a gesture of Christian love may be made with these or other words.*

---

<sup>17</sup> Preamble to the *Constitution of the United Church of Christ*

***Association Representative***

You are hereby granted Ordained Ministerial Standing in the United Church of Christ. We present you with this certificate of standing along with the UCC Ministerial Code.

*The newly ordained minister may greet the faithful with these or other words.*

***Newly Ordained Minister (to all gathered)***

The Peace of Christ be with you all.

***Congregation***

**And also with you.**

***Newly Ordained Minister***

Let us offer one another a sign of Christ's Peace.

*Publishers grant to any local church affiliated with the United Church of Christ permission to reproduce for distribution to members of the congregation, provided that no part of such reproduction is sold or distributed beyond services held in that local church, and provided that the following credit line be used: © 2018 by Local Church Ministries, United Church of Christ, Cleveland, OH. All rights reserved.*