

Ordination/Installation/ Commissioning Guidelines

Some of the joys and responsibilities of a presbytery are the ordaining and installing of teaching elders and the commissioning of ruling elders. At these special worship services people of the presbytery gather together to affirm and celebrate the partnerships in ministry, which God has called and formed into being. To assist in the forming of the commissions for ordinations, installations, and commissioning's, and in the ordering of these worship services, the following guidelines have been provided:

Date of Service

- The Presbytery Moderator will work with the Pastor-elect or Ruling Elder-elect to schedule the date, time, and sometimes location of the service, according to the availability of presbytery leadership and the Pastor-elect or Ruling Elder-elect as well as the schedules of the congregation and the presbytery.
- In the Presbytery of Scioto Valley (PSV) ordination/installation/commissioning services are usually held at 3 p.m. or 4 p.m. on a Sunday afternoon.

Commission

- Typically, 6-8 teaching and ruling elders serve on the commission, but additional teaching and ruling elders may be added, if desired.
- A balance of teaching and ruling elders as well as men and women are recommended.
- At least one commission member needs to be a ruling elder of the congregation, where the pastor-elect is to be installed or where the ruling elder is to be commissioned.
- Majority of the commission members need to be from Presbytery of Scioto Valley.
- Teaching and ruling elders outside of PSV may be seated as corresponding members of the commission.
- Pastor-elect/ Ruling Elder-elect is to send proposed list of commission members to Moderator for approval before contacting potential commission members.
- Moderator is available for suggestions for commission members.
- Additional people, who are not ordained as teaching and ruling elders, may be involved in the service, but are not seated on the commission.

Commission meeting

- Commission meets 30-60 minutes prior to the ordination/installation service
- Meeting agenda includes seating of commission members, reviewing the order of worship and the logistics of the service (seating arrangements, processional order, if one is desired, location of laying on of hands, etc.)
- The meeting usually lasts 20-30 minutes, depending on the complexity of the service and its logistics.
- The commission approves its dissolution after the completion of the service's benediction.
- The Pastor-elect or Ruling Elder-elect is responsible for notifying the commission members of the meeting time and its room location.

Worship service

- Pastor-elect determines if teaching elders are wearing robes and the color of the stoles to be worn (Red is the traditional color for such worship services.)
- The pastor-elect decides if communion will be a part of the worship service.
- Typically, the newly ordained/installed teaching elder or newly commissioned ruling elder officiates communion, if it is part of the ordination/installation/ commissioning service. He/She may do this alone or share the officiating with one or two other teaching elders from the commission.
- Pastor- elect may also decide to be anointed as part of the worship.
- Presbytery Moderator or Vice Moderator is responsible for the actual ordination/installation portion of the worship service (constitutional questions to pastor-elect, laying on of hands, declaration, and welcome)
- Additional installation liturgy (litany, prayer, etc.) is usually done by the Moderator or Vice-Moderator but may also be done by presbytery staff or other presbytery leadership.
- Presbytery Moderator or Vice Moderator usually gives the welcome and statement of purpose at the beginning of the worship service.
- The ruling elder of the congregation, who is a member of the commission, is responsible for asking the constitutional questions to the congregation.
- The offering received at the service is designated **only** for the Presbytery's Pastor Emergency Relief Fund, since ordinations, installations, and commissioning's are responsibilities of the Presbytery.
- This offering is counted by two church members following worship, deposited into the church's account, and then a check is written to **The Presbytery of Scioto Valley** for the full amount and mailed to the PSV office.
- In an ordination service the presentation of symbols of ministry is optional, and when included the symbols are provided by the congregation.
- Traditionally the newly ordained/installed teaching elder or newly commissioned ruling elder gives the benediction at the close of the service.
- The pastor-elect is responsible for getting the final order of worship to the commission members and any other worship leaders before the day of ordination/installation service.
- Outlines and samples of liturgy for these worship services can be found in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *Book of Occasional Services*.
- Orders of worship from previous ordination, installation, or commissioning services within the Presbytery of Scioto Valley may be supplied upon request.

For further information, contact:
Presbytery Moderator

Executive Presbyter Jeannie Harsh
jeannie@psvonline.org
614-847-0565 (PSV office)

or Stated Clerk Jeff Schooley
statedclerk@psvonline.org
614-847-0565 (PSV office)

CONSTITUTING A COMMISSION

(This meeting of the Commission usually takes place 30-45 minutes before the service.)

1. Open with Prayer. (*An example*)

God of prophets and apostles, you have chosen leaders to lead your people in the way of Jesus Christ. We thank you that in our day you are still claiming men and women for particular work within the church.

As *(Name)* has dedicated *him/herself* to you, let us pledge ourselves to *him/her*, ...
So that, surrounded by affection and hope, *he/she* may grow in wisdom, mature in love...
and continue to be a faithful worker, approved by Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.

2. Constitute the Commission with words like:

"We are gathered here to Ordain (*or to Ordain and Install*) *NAME* as a Teaching Elder – (*if appropriate*) "...and to install her/him as Pastor (or Associate Pastor, or "these two as Co-Pastors") of *church name*, and this Commission is duly constituted for this purpose."

OR - "We are gathered here to Commission *NAME* to serve as a Commissioned Ruling Elder for *church name*, and this Commission is duly constituted for this purpose."

3. Vote to receive and seat any Corresponding members of the Commission (that is, those from other Presbyteries, denominations, etc., who are present and part of the commission, including any ecumenical delegates.)
4. Ask person to be ordained and/or installed (or commissioned) to review the worship service so that all parts of the service are clear. (For example, who sits where, what order to enter, and so on). The person being ordained and/or installed is seated in the front pews, and not in the chancel or pulpit area. It is appropriate that the person being ordained / installed / commissioned be escorted to the chancel area to answer the questions and later to offer the Benediction.
5. Remind the person making any announcements to announce that the offering taken at Ordination and/or Installation services in the Presbytery of Scioto Valley goes to the presbytery's Pastor's Emergency Relief Fund. (The check from the church should be sent to the Presbytery office, appropriately marked with this information). If the ordination / installation takes place during the regular Sunday morning worship service, it is appropriate that that church offer a gift of funds to the scholarship assistance fund.
6. Toward the end of this Commission meeting, indicate that, "If there is no objection, this Commission will be dismissed with the Benediction at the end of the worship service."
7. **Submit As Soon As Possible - that's ASAP - to the Stated Clerk** the minutes of this Commission meeting, using the form provided titled "Minutes of Commission to Ordain and/or Install _____."

The Stated Clerk will put this information into a form needed for the Presbytery minutes. Please send this information to the Clerk in writing, or by e-mail:

Rev. Jeff Schooley or statedclerk@psvonline.org
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