



**Ordination or
Installation of
Ministers**

RCNZ

Ordination or installation of ministers of the Word

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ,

It is our privilege to witness the ordination/installation of our brother _____ *name* to the office of minister of the Word in this church.

Instruction

The Scriptures teach us that Jesus Christ, through his Word and Spirit, gathers, protects and preserves his church, and gives her teaching and care so that she may grow in faith, hope and love. All of us are called to serve in the church, but to some Christ has given special office. The Apostle Paul declares that Christ “gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”¹

Ministers are called by God to preach the gospel and to regard the faithful proclamation of the Word as their first responsibility.² They are ambassadors of Christ,³ and their preaching calls sinners to be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. As shepherds of the flock, they also preach the gospel to nurture the congregation in the Christian faith and to strengthen it against error.⁴

The minister of the Word is called to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, which Christ has given the church as visible signs and seals of God’s covenant with his people.

The minister of the Word is called to prayer. In speaking of their calling, the apostles say: “We will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word”.⁵ It is the calling of ministers to lead the people of

God in making “requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving ... for everyone.”⁶

The minister of the Word is called, together with the other elders, to rule over the people of God, giving guidance and counsel as necessary for the Christian life, exhorting them to contend earnestly for the faith,⁷ and instructing them in sound doctrine. They are appointed to shepherd the church of Christ, which he purchased with his own blood. They watch over the church of God to keep her in good order and discipline, supervising public worship and faithfully exercising the keys of the kingdom.

Ministers must watch their life and doctrine closely,⁸ striving continually to be filled with the Holy Spirit,⁹ and fanning into flame the gift of God which is in them.¹⁰

From all this it is clear that the ministry of the Word is a most responsible task and no one can do it faithfully in his own strength. Therefore, we look to our gracious Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is able to equip his servants for the work to which he has called them.

We rejoice that in his faithful love the Lord Jesus has provided a minister to serve as pastor and teacher of this congregation. With thankfulness, we receive this servant of the Lord from the hand of the Chief Shepherd.

Vows

Brother _____ *name*, so that the church may hear that you are willing to take up your office, please stand, and in the presence of God and his church answer the following questions:

1. Do you believe that, in the call of this congregation, you are called by God himself to serve in this holy office?
2. Do you believe that the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and do you reject every doctrine in conflict with them?

3. Do you believe that the whole system of doctrine as taught in the creeds and confessions of this church fully agrees with the Word of God?
4. Do you promise to carry out the work of your office faithfully, to love the church and all its members, to live a life worthy of your calling, and to submit yourself to the government and discipline of the church?

Answer: I do, God helping me.

In the case of ordination, other office bearers present may be invited to come forward for the laying on of hands.

The officiating minister shall then say:

May God, our heavenly Father, who has called you to this holy office, guide you by his Word, equip you with his Holy Spirit, and so direct your ministry that his church may increase, his kingdom be extended, and his name be praised. Amen.

Charges

To the minister:

I charge you, brother and fellow-servant in Christ: preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. Endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.¹¹ Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the Word of truth.¹² Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.¹³ Keep watch over yourself and all the flock. Be a shepherd of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.¹⁴ Set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity.¹⁵ Pray continually for the church. Do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord,¹⁶ but be willing to suffer for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling.¹⁷

And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.¹⁸

To the congregation:

And I charge you, people of God: receive your minister in the Lord with all joy and hold him in honour.¹⁹ Receive the Word which he shall preach to you, not as the word of man but, as it actually is, the Word of God.²⁰ Submit to those whom God has placed over you, for they keep watch over you as men who must give an account. May they do this with joy and not with sorrow, for that would be of no advantage to you.²¹ Pray for your minister, encourage him in his calling, and faithfully work with him to glorify God, to build up his church, and to draw the lost to Christ.

Prayer

Our merciful Father in heaven, thank you for providing faithful and gifted servants to build up the body of Christ. As our brother _____ *name* assumes the responsibilities of his office, we pray that you will fill him with the Holy Spirit.

Equip him with wisdom and give him strength for his task. May he work faithfully in your church. Under his guidance let your people grow in every spiritual grace, in vibrant faith and in committed service that promotes your reign in the world.

Deliver him from an attitude towards his office that is casual or self-assured. In his work grant him a humble dependence upon your grace, that he may come to you with all his needs.

Through his ministry preserve your church in peace, and may she grow in number and in holiness. Give him courage to fulfil his calling against every difficulty, and grant him power through your Spirit to be steadfast to the end.

May your people receive him as having been sent by you. May they receive his preaching and teaching with all reverence and, believing in Christ, become partakers of eternal life.

We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.

¹ Ephesians 4:11–13.

² Timothy 4:1–2.

³ 2 Corinthians 5:20.

⁴ Titus 1:9.

⁵ Acts 6:4.

⁶ 1 Timothy 2:1.

⁷ Jude 3.

⁸ 1 Timothy 4:16.

⁹ Ephesians 5:18.

¹⁰ 2 Timothy 1:6.

¹¹ 2 Timothy 4:2, 5.

¹² 2 Timothy 2:15.

¹³ 1 Timothy 4:13.

¹⁴ Acts 20:28.

¹⁵ 1 Timothy 4:12.

¹⁶ 2 Timothy 1:8; Romans 1:16.

¹⁷ 2 Timothy 1:8–9.

¹⁸ 1 Peter 5:4.

¹⁹ Philippians 2:29.

²⁰ 1 Thessalonians 2:13.

²¹ Hebrews 13:17.