

STAGE VI: THE CALL

Ordination/Installation Guidelines and Suggestions

All ordinations and installations are services of the Presbytery and governed by the *Book of Order*. The particular church, as the host, in consultation with the Presbytery's Moderator or Designee, prepares an order of service appropriate to its own circumstances, within the guidelines of the Presbytery and the mandates of the *Book of Order*. [**Sample Services of Ordination and Installation are available at the Presbytery Office.**] The particular church will be responsible for issuing invitations to the minister members and congregations of the Presbytery for the service and shall be responsible for the postage. Presbytery will provide mailing labels.

The Commission to Install (and Commission to Ordain if appropriate) is chaired by the Moderator or his/her representative and shall include in addition to the Moderator participants from at least four and preferably six different churches from within the Presbytery. (The Moderator's church is not to be counted in the six.) Among these participants there shall be a minimum of three elders and three clergy from within the Presbytery. There shall be no more than one elder from a single church. Attention shall be paid to a balance of age and gender. Additional individuals not included in the commission may be invited to participate in the service upon approval of the Presbytery. Upon completion of the forms [Plans for Installation Service and Installing Commission](#) and [Plans for Ordination Commission](#), if needed, they shall be submitted to the COM and the Presbytery for approval. Usually all members of the Commission have speaking parts in the service.

Recognition of Presbytery: Any service bulletin should specify that this is a service of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.

Installation Questions: References. A current copy of the *Book of Order* should be used to make sure the questions and statements are fully correct.

Time and Duration: The ordination of a candidate to the Ministry of 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. The service of installation of a pastor or associate pastor shall be conducted at a convenient time to enable the substantial participation of the presbytery. The service for any of the above should not last longer than 90 minutes.

Sermon and Charges: A sermon appropriate to the occasion should be preached. Therefore this should not be addressed only to the pastor or to the congregation, but to all present. The charges, in their turn, are focused messages, not little sermons.

Offering: There shall be an offering for the work of the Committee on Preparation for Ministry. The purpose of the offering, the assistance of candidates, should be clearly stated. When the installation of an Associate takes place during the regular worship time, a special offering for the Committee on Preparation for Ministry Aid for Candidates for the Ministry should be taken. This offering is sent to the Presbytery of Genesee Valley.

Communion: As for any other service of Presbytery, at these services there must be an action of Presbytery to authorize the celebration of Communion.

Inclusive Language: By its action in March, 1981, the Presbytery established as its policy that at all services of Presbytery, care shall be taken to “...make full use of the Biblical language in referring to God, and to use inclusive language in referring to the people of God and in the use of hymns.”

Inviting of Elders: All elders and ministers of our denomination shall be invited to come forward for the laying on of hands and/or the greeting of the new pastor. Elders of other churches in the Reformed tradition and all other clergy are normally also invited to come forward for this purpose.

In addition to the various requirements and guidelines for the ordination and installation services, the following suggestions are offered as ways to help make these services as effective and meaningful as possible:

Statement of Purpose: It is appropriate for the service to include a statement of purpose. The substance of this statement may carry the following ideas:

In the name of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, and by the order of the Presbytery of Genesee Valley of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), we are here to (ordain to the Gospel ministry) (install as _____ in _____ Church) _____ (pastor's name). We pray that the blessing of God will rest upon these actions, and that what we do here on earth today may be confirmed in heaven.

Sermon and Charges: The sermon should not exceed 20 minutes. A charge should not exceed 7 minutes. A charge to the congregation ordinarily is appropriate only when a pastor is being installed.

The Benediction: It is appropriate that a word of explanation be given to make clear that this is the first and solemn pastoral act of the new pastor. It is customary for the pastor to be escorted for this act.

Presentation of Gifts: The presentation of gifts ordinarily is appropriate at a reception or some time other than the installation service.