

A Service of Ordination of a Minister of the Word

(Approved in its present form by the July 2013 Assembly Standing Committee)

Notes for the Service of Ordination

- 1 The Uniting Church in Australia ordains both deacons and ministers of the Word. Ordination is an act of the presbytery which has pastoral responsibility for the ordinand. Where that presbytery is the one to which the ordinand was transferred for the licensed year, it “shall be guided in its decision by the report of the Presbytery which last had pastoral care of the candidate” (Regulation 2.3.1(b)). Where the ordinand is to minister within yet another presbytery, the presbytery having pastoral responsibility may arrange for the presbytery which next has pastoral responsibility to ordain. (Regulation 2.3.1(c)).
- 2 The service is conducted at a time and place determined by the presbytery and in the presence of a congregation. This congregation will normally be the one in which the intern phase has been completed or which has a significant association with the ordinand. (Regulation 2.3.3.)
- 3 The chairperson leads the service in the name of the presbytery, which is the council concerned with the oversight of ministry in the Uniting Church. The chairperson shall ask the questions of the ordinand, deliver the Charge in the words given, offer the ordination prayer and make the Declaration of Ordination. If the chairperson is unavailable, the presbytery may, on the nomination of the chairperson, authorise another member to lead the service. (Regulation 2.3.4.)
- 4 Other people may be invited by the presbytery to lead parts of The Gathering of the People of God and The Service of the Word.
- 5 The presbytery determines who presides at The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. The normal practice where the Chairperson is an ordained minister, is for the Chairperson to preside. However the presbytery may appoint another ordained member of presbytery, including the newly-ordained minister, to fulfil this role.
- 6 The Preaching of the Word should be an exposition of one or more of the Bible readings and should affirm the dignity and importance of the office of the ministry of the Word. The sermon may also include an exhortation to the people to share in the one ministry of Christ.
- 7 The ‘narration of steps’ should be succinct but sufficient to establish the readiness of the candidate. The essential content is outlined in the rubric at section 12.
- 8 The ordinand may be invited to make a statement to the presbytery and congregation but this should be a brief statement of faith and affirmation of his/her calling to the ministry. Other matters such as thanks to family and church members are more appropriately expressed at a social gathering after the service.

- 9 The Questions (14) are those approved by the November 2008 Assembly Standing Committee. An additional clause has been added to the Charge as approved by the July 2013 Assembly Standing Committee.
- 10 The presbytery appoints those of its members who are to take part in the laying on of hands. There shall be at least two ordained ministers and two lay persons. (Regulation 2.3.4). Where the presbytery with responsibility for the pastoral care of the ordinand is not the ordaining presbytery, members of that presbytery may also be associated with the ordaining presbytery in order to participate in this act.
- 11 If liturgical colours are used, the colour for a service of Ordination is red. A red stole may be presented to the ordinand at the appropriate point in the service. A minister of the Word wears the stole around the neck and hanging free in front. Where the ordinand does not intend to use a set of liturgical stoles a Uniting Church blue scarf may be presented if desired. This is worn around the neck and hanging free in front. It is appropriate for the chairperson of presbytery to wear a scarf of office if s/he is wearing liturgical dress.
- 12 If the ordination takes place in the congregation or location in which the ordinand is to minister, an act of induction shall follow the ordination.
- 13 The presbytery determines the use of the offering money. It is recommended that this be for ministerial training or for the work of the presbytery.
- 14 The following Bible readings may be appropriate for a service of Ordination:

OLD TESTAMENT

Numbers 11:16-17, 24-25	Bearing the burden of the people
Isaiah 6:1-13	Here am I! Send me
Isaiah 43: 8-13	You are my witnesses
Isaiah 52:7-10	Your God reigns
Isaiah 55:6-11	My word shall not return to me empty
Jeremiah 1:4-12	Before you were born I consecrated you
Jeremiah 31:31-34	A new covenant
Ezekiel 34:11-16	I myself will be your shepherd, says the Lord
Amos 5:21-24	Let justice roll down like waters
Micah 6:6-8	Justice, kindness, humility

PSALM

Psalm 23	The Lord is my shepherd
Psalm 96	Worship the Lord in holy splendour
Psalm 100	We are his people and the sheep of his pasture
Psalm 121	My help comes from the Lord

NEW TESTAMENT

Acts 8:26-40	The witness of Philip
Acts 20:28-35	Guardian of the flock

Romans 10:8b-17	Those who preach good news
Romans 12:1-13	Use the gifts God has given
1 Corinthians 1:18-31	We preach Christ crucified
1 Corinthians 3:10-23	No other foundation but Christ
1 Corinthians 12:4-13	Varieties of gifts
1 Corinthians 12:27–13:7	A still more excellent way
2 Corinthians 4:5-12	We preach Jesus Christ as Lord
2 Corinthians 5:14-20	The message of reconciliation
Ephesians 4:1-16	The gifts of the ascended Christ to his Church
Hebrews 12: 1-3, 12-14	Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of our faith
1 Timothy 4:6-16	A good servant of Christ Jesus
1 Peter 4:7-11	Good stewards of God's varied grace
1 Peter 5:1-7	Tend the flock of God

GOSPEL

Matthew 9: 35-38	Sending out the labourers
Matthew 28:16-20	Make disciples of all nations
Mark 10:35-45	Whoever would be great among you
Mark 12:28-34	The greatest commandment
Luke 4.16-21 (22-30)	Good news to the poor
Luke 10:1-12	The Lord of the harvest
Luke 12:35-40	Vigilant servants
Luke 22:24-27	I am among you as one who serves
John 10:11-18	The good shepherd
John 12:20-26	Where I am, there will my servant be
John 13:12-17	I have given you an example
John 14:25-31	The Holy Spirit will teach you all things
John 15:7-17	Abide in Christ
John 20:19-23	As the Father sent me, so I send you

An Outline of a Service of Ordination of a Minister of the Word

The Gathering of the People of God

- 1 ▶ Call to Worship
- 2 Hymn/Song of Praise
- 3 ▶ Welcome and Greeting
- 4 ▶ Prayer of Confession
- ▶ Declaration of Forgiveness

The Service of the Word

- 5 First Reading
- 6 Psalm
- 7 Second Reading
- 8 ▶ Gospel
- 9 Hymn/Song or Anthem
- 10 ▶ Preaching of the Word
- 11 ▶ Nicene Creed

The Service of Ordination

- 12 ▶ Presentation of the Ordinand
- 13 ▶ The Charge
- 14 ▶ The Questions
- 15 ▶ The Ordination
- 16 ▶ Declaration of Ordination
- 17 ▶ Presentation of the Bible
- 18 ▶ The Presbytery
- 19 The Offering
- 20 ▶ Prayers of the People

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

- 21 ▶ The Peace
- 22 Hymn/Song
- 23 ▶ Setting of the Table

The service continues with the Setting of the Table. A Great Prayer of Thanksgiving shall follow; if the Great Prayer in SLD-1 is used, the special thanksgiving on p. 176 may be included.

The Sending Forth of the People of God

- Hymn/Song
▶ Dismissal and Blessing

A Service of Ordination of a Minister of the Word

The Gathering of the People of God

1 ► CALL TO WORSHIP

The minister or an elder of the local congregation says: *Let us worship God*; and announces the hymn or song of praise.

The people stand. Those who are leading the service enter the church during the singing of the hymn.

2 HYMN/SONG OF PRAISE

The people remain standing after singing.

3 WELCOME AND GREETING

The chairperson welcomes the people, and says:

The Presbytery of...
has resolved to ordain NNN
as a minister of the Word
in the Church of Jesus Christ.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
and the love of God
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

And also with you.

[2 Corinthians 13:13](#)

4 ► PRAYER OF CONFESSION

The chairperson pours water into the baptismal font and says:

In baptism we are claimed by God,
and given the gift of the Holy Spirit
that we may live as witnesses to Jesus Christ
and share his ministry in the world.

[Service of Baptism, *Uniting in Worship* 2](#)

We have not always lived as Christ's disciples.
Let us confess our sins:

We have failed to live out our baptism:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

We have been blind to the vision of a renewed world:
Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

We have been indifferent to the suffering of others:
Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

In your mercy, pardon and restore us,
that bound together in the ministry of Christ
we may serve you with joy
all the days of our life.
Amen.

► DECLARATION OF FORGIVENESS

God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself,
not counting our sins against us,
and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

2 Corinthians 5:19

The chairperson says:

Hear then Christ's word of grace to us:
'Your sins are forgiven.'
Thanks be to God.

Mark 2:5

The chairperson scoops water from the font and sprinkles it towards the people, saying,

Through baptism, the sign of the cross is upon you.
Remember your baptism and be thankful.
**As members of Christ's body, the Church,
we will live out our baptism,
serving together in Christ's name.**

The Service of the Word

If only two Bible readings are used, an Old Testament or epistle reading and a Gospel reading shall be read.

If a psalm is used, it may be printed in the order of service to be said or sung by the people.

- 5 FIRST READING
- 6 PSALM
- 7 SECOND READING
- 8 ► GOSPEL

The following may be used after the final reading:

For the word of the Lord:
Thanks be to God.

9 HYMN/SONG OR ANTHEM

10 ► PREACHING OF THE WORD

See Note 6.

11 ► NICENE CREED

The people stand.

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father,
who with the Father and the Son
is worshipped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

The people sit.

The Service of Ordination

12 ► PRESENTATION OF THE ORDINAND

The chairperson shall lead in prayer as follows:

Let us pray.
Most holy God,
we bless you for calling us
into the community of your universal Church.
We praise you that in every generation
you have given ministers to your Church
that your people may be nourished in faith
and equipped for service.

We pray that through word and sacrament
your Church may be renewed
and strengthened to do your will.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The secretary of presbytery brings the ordinand forward to stand before the chairperson and says:

Chairperson, I present NNN
for ordination as a minister of the Word.

The secretary gives a brief 'narration of steps' which shall include reference to
*the ordinand's reception as a candidate
*the completion of educational and other requirements with respect to ordination as a minister of the Word

The chairperson says:

People of God,
we believe that, by the grace of God,
N is worthy to be ordained a minister of the Word in the Church of God.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

The people may applaud.
The ordinand may be invited to make a brief statement concerning his/her faith and call to ministry.

13 ► THE CHARGE

The chairperson delivers the Charge in these words:

N,
in the name of Jesus Christ, the only Head of the Church, we are here to ordain you as a
minister of the Word by prayer and the laying on of hands.

As a minister of the Word, you are called to receive the witness to Christ in the holy
Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and to proclaim from them the gospel of Jesus
Christ in word and deed. You are entrusted to preside at the sacraments of baptism and the
eucharist, instituted by our Lord as signs and seals of the gospel and his gift to the Church;
you will celebrate these sacraments with the people of God.

Taking Christ the Good Shepherd as your example, you are called to lead God's people in
worship, witness and service; to equip them for their ministry and mission; and to work with
them in building up the body of Christ. You are called to strive for peace and unity among all
Christian people, especially among those with whom you serve.

You will receive the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as safeguarding and witnessing to the faith of the one holy catholic and apostolic Church, and use them in worship and instruction.

Learning from the Confessional Documents of the Uniting Church in Australia, you will diligently teach Christ's people, reminding them of the centrality of the person and work of Jesus Christ and the grace which justifies them through faith.

You will announce the good news of God in Christ to those beyond the community of faith, stand alongside those who suffer, and work for justice and peace in the world.

You will affirm and commit yourself to the covenant made between the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress and the Uniting Church and accept the obligation to serve both First and Second peoples.

Relying on the power of the Holy Spirit, you will be diligent in the study of the Bible, you will seek to live a holy and disciplined life and be faithful in prayer.

14 ► THE QUESTIONS

The ordinand stands.
The chairperson says:

In this ordination,
the Uniting Church in Australia acts and speaks
within the one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
God in Christ acts and speaks
through all that the Church does in obedience to God's will.
God gives you grace and authority
for this ministry.

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 anew Jesus Christ as Lord?

I do.

Do you believe that you are truly called
by God and the Church
to the office and work of a minister of the Word?

I do.

Do you embrace the faith and unity of the holy, catholic and apostolic Church,
as set forth in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments,
expressed in the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds
and described in the Basis of Union?

I do.

In your life and work within the Uniting Church
will you be guided by its Basis of Union,
and will you submit yourself to the Church's discipline?

With God's help, I will.

May the One
who has given you the will to do these things
give you the grace to perform them;
that the work which God has begun in you
may be brought to fulfilment.

The people say:

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

15 ► THE ORDINATION

The chairperson addresses the people:

Beloved in Christ,
let us pray in silence for N,
before we ordain and send him/her forth to the work
for which we believe he/she has been called
by the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray:

The ordinand kneels.

After a time of silent prayer the congregation joins in the hymn, 'Come, Holy Spirit, our souls inspire' (*Together in Song*, 396) or another hymn to the Holy Spirit.

The people remain standing at the conclusion of the hymn.

Those members of presbytery appointed to lay on hands, take their places.

The chairperson, with both hands extended over the ordinand/s, offers this prayer:

We praise you, holy God,
beyond human sight, above human thought,
infinite and unsearchable,
heaven and earth cannot contain you.

We praise you, merciful God,
in your boundless love and goodness
you came among us in Jesus Christ,
crucified, risen and exalted as Saviour and Lord of all,
Head of the Church and giver of gifts
to equip your people for service
and to build up his body, the Church,
that all may come to the unity of the faith.

We praise you, faithful God,
for the gift of the Holy Spirit,
who leads your Church into all truth

that we may share in the ministry of Christ
and fulfil your gracious purposes.

Now we give you thanks that you have called N
whom we ordain in your name
to be a minister of the Word in your Church.

Hands are laid on the ordinand's head and the following words are said by the chairperson. If there is more than one ordinand, these words are said for each one, hands being laid on that ordinand's head.

God of grace,
through your Spirit –
burning fire, gentle dove –
empower your servant, N,
for the office and work of a minister of the Word
in the Church of God
that your people may be strengthened
and your holy name be glorified;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The people respond

Amen.

The Aaronic blessing may be said or sung by the people, (*Together in Song*, 776), or another blessing may be used.

**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.**

Numbers 6:24-26

16 ► DECLARATION OF ORDINATION

The newly-ordained minister stands and faces the people.

The chairperson declares:

In the name of Jesus Christ
the sovereign Head of the Church,
and by the authority of the Presbytery of,
we declare that NNN
is now a minister of the Word
in the Church of God.

The declaration may be followed by the singing of a doxology, e.g., *Together in Song*, 768-775.

The people sit.

17 ► PRESENTATION OF THE BIBLE

The chairperson says:

N, receive this Bible
as a sign of the authority given you

to preach the word of God
and to administer the holy sacraments.

*A red ministerial stole or UCA blue scarf may be presented.
The chairperson may say:*

N, receive this stole/*scarf* as a sign
of the joyful obedience which you owe to Christ.

18 ► THE PRESBYTERY

The chairperson invites members of the presbytery to come forward and give the newly-ordained minister the right hand of fellowship.

19 THE OFFERING

20 ► PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The prayers are led by a member of the inducting presbytery or a representative group of people from the presbytery and/or congregation.

Intercessions may include:

**The minister and his/her family.*

**The needs of the Church and the world.*

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Normally the chairperson of the ordaining presbytery, if an ordained minister, presides at the sacrament (see Note 5).

21 ► THE PEACE

*The people stand for the greeting of peace.
The minister presiding at the sacrament says:*

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

The people may exchange a sign of peace.

22 HYMN/SONG

23 ► SETTING OF THE TABLE

The service continues with the Setting of the Table. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper continues, according to SLD-1 or SLD-2. If the Great Prayer in SLD-1 is used, the special thanksgiving on p. 176 may be included.

The Sending Forth of the People of God

HYMN/SONG

► DISMISSAL AND BLESSING

The chairperson of the ordaining presbytery says:

Go forth into the world in peace;
be of good courage;
hold fast that which is good;
render to no one evil for evil;
strengthen the faint-hearted;
support the weak;
help the afflicted;
honour all people;
love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**