CLASSICAL SERVICES

ORDER FOR ORDI NATION
TO THE OFFICE OF
MINISTER OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

The Book of Church Order (Chapter 1, Part II, Article 10, Section 5) directs the classis to appoint a time for the ordination service of candidates for the ministry and to conduct the service with proper solemnity and according to the order below. A brief sermon suitable to the occasion shall be preached. The presiding officer of the classis shall begin, following the proclamation of the Word.

PRESENTATION

Beloved in the Lord,
we have come to ordain a minister of Word and sacrament
in Christ’s holy church.
Christ alone is the source of all Christian ministry,
through the ages calling men and women to serve.

By the Holy Spirit all who believe and are baptized receive a ministry
to witness to Jesus as Savior and Lord, and
to love and serve those with whom they live and work.
We are ambassadors for Christ,
who reconciles and makes whole.
We are the salt of the earth;
we are the light of the world.

Following his resurrection and ascension,
Christ gave gifts to the church.
These gifts 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.

We stand within a tradition
where God calls and empowers
deacons, elders, and ministers of Word and sacrament
to enable the whole mission of the church.

Therefore let us welcome NN (using full name),
who comes to be ordained to the ministry of Word and sacrament.
A minister and elder of the classis student supervision committee, together with a representative of the congregation or other ministry requesting the ordination, present the candidate. The classis presenter/s shall say:

We present N (use Christian name only), whom we have examined and found to be a person of sound learning and Christian character.

On behalf of the Classis of N_______________,
we affirm that she/he is ready to be ordained to the Office of Minister of Word and Sacrament.

The candidate shall remain standing, facing the presiding officer. The presenters return to their places. The presiding officer continues:

Ministers are called to build up Christ’s church.

They are to proclaim God’s Word,
to declare forgiveness through Jesus Christ,
to call publicly on the name of the Lord on behalf of the whole congregation,
to celebrate Christ’s holy sacraments,
bring the sick and presiding at the Lord’s Supper.

They are to be pastors and teachers,
sharing people’s joys and sorrows,
encouraging the faithful, recalling those who fall away,
helping the sick and the dying.

N______________, before almighty God, and in the presence of this congregation, the classis asks you to answer sincerely these questions:

Do you confess together with us and the church throughout all ages your faith in one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

Yes, truly, with all my heart.

The presiding officer shall invite the congregation to stand:

Let us all stand with N______________, confessing our Christian faith in the words of the Apostles’ Creed.
I believe in God, the Father almighty, 
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, 
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, 
born of the Virgin Mary, 
suffered under Pontius Pilate, 
was crucified, died, and was buried; 
he descended to the dead. 
On the third day he rose again; 
he ascended into heaven, 
he is seated at the right hand of the Father, 
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, 
the holy catholic Church, 
the communion of saints, 
the forgiveness of sins, 
the resurrection of the body, 
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The congregation is seated; the candidate shall remain standing.

Do you believe in your heart that you are called by Christ’s church, 
and therefore by God, to this ministry of Word and sacrament?

Yes, truly, with all my heart.

Do you believe the books of the Old and New Testaments 
to be the Word of God and the perfect doctrine of salvation, 
rejecting all contrary beliefs?

Yes, truly, with all my heart.

Will you proclaim the gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; 
upholding the witness of Holy Scripture against all schisms and heresies?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you be diligent in your study of Holy Scripture and 
in your use of the means of grace? 
Will you pray for God’s people and 
lead them by your own example in faithful service and holy living?
I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you accept the church’s order and governance, submitting to ecclesiastical discipline should you become delinquent in either life or doctrine?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you be loyal to the witness and work of the Reformed Church in America, using all your abilities to further its Christian mission here and throughout the world?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

Will you strive to fulfill faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully, all the duties of a minister of Christ: to preach the Word of God in sincerity, to administer the sacraments in purity, to maintain proper discipline in the household of God, and to shepherd the flock faithfully?

I will, and I ask God to help me.

ORDINATION

The candidate shall kneel. The presiding officer shall call the elders and ministers of the classis to come forward (all will stay through the welcome). Those the classis shall invite may join in the laying on of hands during the prayer. The presiding officer shall continue:

Let us pray.

God of grace, pour out your Holy Spirit, gentle as a dove, burning as fire, upon N__________ and fill her/him with grace and power for this ministry of Word and sacrament; in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

At the conclusion of the prayer with the laying on of hands, the candidate shall stand, the classis remains in front, and the presiding officer continues:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only head of the church,
I now declare that \textit{NN} is ordained to the Office of Minister of Word and Sacrament.

**RESPONSE TO ORDINATION**

\textit{N}, will you publicly declare your commitment to Christian ministry among us?

The candidate shall respond by reading aloud the Form of the Declaration for Ministers. The congregation will stand for the reading and signing of the formulary.

In the name of our Lord, welcome to \textit{N} Classis. We pledge our support, affection, and prayers while you live and work among us as a servant and minister of God’s Word.

Classis members and delegates extend the right hand of fellowship to the new member before returning to their places.

The newly ordained minister may be robed at this time.

The person designated by the classis shall deliver the charge. The charge which follows shall be read. Additional brief counsel, if authorized by the classis, may be made before it.

Beloved servant in Christ, be attentive to yourself and to all the flock given to your care by the Holy Spirit. Love Christ: feed his lambs, tend his sheep. Be an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Attend to reading, prayer, study, preaching, and teaching. Do not neglect the gift that is in you. Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers. \textit{N}, guard what has been entrusted to you.
And when the chief shepherd appears,
you will win the crown of glory that never fades away.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION WITH THE LORD’S PRAYER

Almighty and ever loving God,
you taught us to pray
for ourselves and for others,
and to give thanks for all of life.

May every grace of ministry rest on N_________________,
keep her/him strong and faithful,
may she/he herald the joy of your kingdom,
serving rather than being served.

Inspire your whole church
with your Spirit of power, unity, and peace.
Grant that all who trust you
may live together in love.

Lead all nations in the way of justice.
Direct those who govern,
that they be fair, maintain order,
support those in need, and defend the oppressed,
that the world may know true peace.

Give grace to all who proclaim the gospel
through Word and sacrament and deeds of mercy,
that by teaching and example
others may come to live for you.

Comfort and deliver, O Lord,
all who are in trouble…
sorrow…poverty…sickness…grief…
Heal them in body, mind, spirit, or circumstance,
working in them, by your grace,
wonders beyond their dreams and hopes,
through Jesus Christ our Savior,
who taught us to pray:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done, 
on earth as in heaven. 
Give us today our daily bread. 
Forgive us our sins 
    as we forgive those who sin against us. 
Save us from the time of trial 
    and deliver us from evil. 
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours 
    now and forever. Amen. 

The peace of Christ be with you. 

And also with you. 

The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper should be celebrated; an officer of the classis shall preside. The communion elements may be presented at this time. Following the sacrament, a Hymn of Thanksgiving after Communion may be sung, after which the newly ordained minister shall deliver the Benediction.