



**Montana Synod**

**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

# **PLANNING GUIDE FOR ORDINATION**

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## INTRODUCTION

Because all of its baptized members share in Christ's ministry of love and service, the church equips and supports them for their ministries in the world. Within this context of ministry, the church calls some of its baptized members for specific ministries.

Within the people of God and for the sake of the gospel ministry entrusted to all believers, God has instituted the office of ministry of word and sacrament. In the service of Ordination, the church entrusts this office to those who have accepted the church's call and sends them into this ministry.

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly.* Augsburg Fortress, p. 187

Ordination itself is an exciting time for both the one being ordained and the larger church; it is the beginning of formal public service to God's people and marks the beginning of responsibilities that come with facilitating all the baptized to fully live into their own vocational call.

Because of this, it is important that the liturgy of ordination and the planning process that surrounds it be both intentional and flexible at the same time. Care must be taken to see that the long tradition of the church's ordination rites are observed, while at the same time allowing for "structured flexibility" that embraces local liturgical expression in a given ministry context.

The *Planning Guide for Ordination* of the Montana Synod will be helpful for all those who have been called to ministry in this synod.

## WHEN, WHERE, HOW

### *Letter of Call is Extended and Accepted*

Ordination happens only when a Letter of Call has been extended from a recognized church body and accepted by an approved seminary graduate. The graduate works closely with the bishop and staff of the assigned synod throughout the call process.

### *Scheduling the Ordination*

The bishop of the Montana Synod is responsible for presiding at all ordinations of those who accept calls within this synod. Setting the date and time of the ordination needs to be done in conjunction with the availability of the bishop, as well as the calendar of the host congregation.

Conversation between a candidate and the bishop about potential ordination dates should begin as early as possible. Once it seems likely that a candidate will be recommended for call by a congregation, and the candidate is inclined to accept that call, a confidential conversation with the bishop should take place to set a *tentative* date and time, subject to the completion of the call process. Other "quiet conversations" should occur with family and key worship participants, so that they can begin making plans to attend.

Ordinands are encouraged to review the synod calendar to avoid conflicting with synodical events: [www.montanasynd.org](http://www.montanasynd.org).

### *Location of the Ordination*

Ordinations may occur at any one of a variety of locations: the ordinand's home congregation, the congregation where the call is accepted, at synod assembly, or other ministry setting where the people of God gather around word and sacrament.

If the ordination is to take place outside of the Montana Synod, the bishop will make every effort to be present to preside (with the approval of the synod bishop in whose territory the ordination occurs). If distance and scheduling prevent the bishop from presiding, the bishop will secure a colleague bishop to preside. The invitation to a colleague bishop should come from the bishop, not the ordinand.

## PARTICIPANTS

The bishop presides during the rite of ordination. Other pastors may address the ordinand with the designated scripture passages during the “Charge” or the bishop may say them all.

The assisting minister may lead numerous portions of the worship service, but will specifically lead the prayers during the ordination rite and hold the worship book of the bishop during the laying on of hands.

The preacher is determined by the preference of the ordinand. Often ordinands invite a seminary professor, internship supervisor, or other mentor pastor to preach at the ordination. The bishop will preach if requested by the ordinand. The ordinand should communicate with the preacher about selection of biblical texts for the service well in advance of the ordination.

The one who presides at Holy Communion may vary. Normally it is the bishop or a designated pastor or the bishop. It is not the newly ordained.

The ordinand is strongly encouraged to incorporate laity into the leadership of liturgy, music, and reading of scripture texts.

The one who presents the ordinand at the beginning of the ordination rite is of the ordinand’s choosing. Examples of presenters include mentor pastor, officer of the congregation in which the ordination takes place, a representative of the synod or the candidacy committee, or a representative of the calling congregation. The one who places the stole onto the shoulders of the ordinand during the ordination rite is also selected by the ordinand.

The ordinand should vest in an alb, process, and sit with family in a front pew until the presentation in the rite of ordination.

During the singing of “Creator Spirit, heavenly dove,” participants move forward for the laying on of hands portion of the rite. As per *ELW* rubrics: “The presiding minister lays both hands on the head of each ordinand. Other ordained pastors who are participating in the laying on of hands place one hand on the ordinand.” Ecumenical clergy are welcome and encouraged to vest, process/recess, and participate in the laying on of hands.

Depending on the circumstances, the ordinand may designate a worship coordinator to provide instructions for all worship leaders, ensure that seating is reserved, manage microphone logistics, provide worship bulletins and hymnals for processing clergy, etc. This detailed-oriented person makes sure everyone knows where they are to go, what they are to do, and when they are to do it.

## WORSHIP PLANNING

### *The Order of Service*

Suggested texts, hymns, prayers, and propers for the service of ordination can be found in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly*, pages 196-198. An outline of the order of service is provided in the “Participation Chart” found in Appendix I of this planning guide.

The end of the worship bulletin should include the following words:

The ordination rite is reprinted from *Evangelical Lutheran Worship Occasional Services for the Assembly*, Augsburg Fortress, copyright © 2009, by permission.

### *A Service of the Whole Church*

When planning an ordination service, the following from the Metropolitan Chicago Synod is helpful:

The call of the Holy Spirit is recognized in a dual way. In one regard, it is the individual who feels the call of the Spirit to seek ordination. In another, it is the recognition of the larger Church that confirms this call and ordains. In this way, the understanding of call mirrors the liturgical understanding of the rites themselves: they are both local (individual) and catholic (responsible to a larger community). Holding these two parts of the ordination liturgy in tension with one another will allow both creativity and form to become invisible, focusing instead for Jesus Christ to be proclaimed in Word and Sacrament among those who celebrate the ordination rites. The liturgy must be able to “bear the weight” of the mysteries in which it engages; it must be celebrated with intentionality, integrity, and beauty. [*A Planning Guide for Ordinations*, page 2]

Ordinations are celebrations of the whole church, led on behalf of the whole church by a synodical bishop in a local ministry context. Ordinations are not like “weddings” nor do they “belong” to any individual, including the ordinand; they are services that rightly understand the collaborative inauguration of ministry between the pastor of the church and the ministry context into which they have been called.

Understanding that the ordination liturgy is not “yours” will aid greatly in the planning and execution of the rite.

Because there will likely be guests present at worship who may be unfamiliar with the liturgy, the worship bulletin should be user friendly to ensure clarity and full participation. This is a worship occasion where printing (or projecting) more may be advisable for the sake of guests.

The bishop’s office will review worship bulletin. Send the order of service electronically to the bishop well in advance of the date of ordination.

### *The Rite of Ordination*

The rite of ordination follows the sermon and hymn of the day. The Nicene Creed or Apostles’ Creed may precede the ordination rite.

The ordination rite is found in Appendix II of this planning guide. This rite is to be copied and pasted *in full* into the worship bulletin, including the rubrics. It should *not be altered* since it is the approved rite of the whole church used at all ordination services.

The hymn prior to the laying on of hands is “Creator Spirit, Heavenly Dove,” *ELW* No. 577. Hymn 578 may be used, or other musical setting of the traditional lyrics. It is suggested that three verses of this hymn be selected.

After the congregation offers acclamation with applause, the newly ordained may address the congregation.

#### *Procession and Recession*

The processional order for worship leaders is as follows (not all need be in the processional, nor do all positions listed need to be included in the service). Ensure that all participants are provided with a worship bulletin and hymnal, know the processional order, and are instructed where they will sit during the service.

Crucifer  
Acolytes  
Book Bearer  
Readers  
Ordinand  
Guest Clergy  
Preacher  
Assisting Minister  
Presiding Minister  
Bishop

The recessional order is *the same* as above: crucifer first; bishop last.

#### *Ordination and Installation*

If the ordination is held in the congregation where a call has been accepted, a rite of installation may follow the ordination. Consult with the bishop concerning the rite to be used.

## OTHER USEFUL ADVICE

#### *Worship and Reception Costs*

The host congregation of the ordination is responsible for producing and printing the worship bulletin, for providing secretarial support, and for all related expenses of the worship service. The cost of a reception following the worship service may be paid by the host congregation as a gift, but they should not be expected to do so; it is appropriate for the ordinand to cover this expense.

#### *Inviting Area Clergy*

Area clergy should be invited to attend the ordination, both ELCA and ecumenical pastors. The host congregation should extend the invitation on the ordinand's behalf. Remember to invite retired clergy. Pastors are invited to assemble in a designated area of the church; vest in the liturgical dress of their tradition; and encouraged to participate in the procession, recession, and the laying on of hands in the ordination rite. The liturgical color for the occasion of an ordination is red.

Invited clergy should be asked to arrive at the church a half hour prior to the start of the service so that they can vest, receive instructions, and pray together before the start of worship. Worship bulletins and hymnals should be available in the gathering area for all clergy guests. Make sure seating is reserved for them in the front pews.

#### *Community Publicity*

Because the occasion of ordination is a time of celebration not only for the church but also for the wider community, the host congregation should consider issuing a press release to the local media. Include a picture of the ordinand in the press release. Invite the local newspaper to cover the ordination.

*"Fund for Leaders" Designated Offering*

It is the practice in the Montana Synod that offerings at all ordinations and installations be given to the "Fund for Leaders" and First Call Theological Education. The ordinand should inform the host congregation of this special offering and how the offering is to be handled.

Checks given should be made out to the host congregation. The host congregation should deposit all gifts and send one check to the Montana Synod.

Any questions concerning the ordination should be directed to the bishop at [jcrist@montanasynod.org](mailto:jcrist@montanasynod.org) or 406-453-1461.

*Acknowledgements:* The Montana Synod wishes to thank the Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and the Metropolitan Chicago Synod.



## APPENDIX I

### PARTICIPANT CHART

The chart below will aid in planning the order of service and determining who is to do what.

Part of the Liturgy	Who does it?	Name?
Prelude	Musicians	
Welcome	Pastor or representative of host congregation	
Confession and Forgiveness <i>or</i> Thanksgiving for Baptism	Pastor or Bishop	
Gathering Song	Musicians and Assembly	Assembly
Greeting	Pastor or Bishop	
Kyrie	Assisting Minister, Cantor, Ensemble or Choir	
Canticle of Praise	Assembly, Choir, or Cantor	
Prayer of the Day	Pastor or Bishop	
First Reading	Lay Reader	
Psalm	Assembly, Ensemble, Choir, or Cantor	
Second Reading	Lay Reader	
Gospel Acclamation	Assembly, Ensemble, Choir or Cantor	
Gospel	Preacher	
Sermon	Preacher	
Hymn of the Day	Assembly	
Creed	Assisting Minister	
Presentation	Presenter	
Address and Questions	Bishop	
Prayers of Intercession	Assisting Minister	
Hymn of Invocation	No. 577 or 578 ( <i>ELW</i> )	Assembly
Thanksgiving	Bishop	
Laying on of Hands	Bishop and Pastors	
Giving of Stole	Stole Presenter	
Charge	Bishop and/or Pastors	
Blessing	Bishop	
Acclamation of Assembly	Bishop and Assembly	Assembly
Response of Newly Ordained	Ordinand	
Peace	Bishop	
Offering	Ushers	
Music during Offering	Ensemble, Choir or Cantor	
Offertory	Assembly, Ensemble, Choir or Cantor	
Offertory Prayer	Assisting Minister	
Great Thanksgiving	Ordinand, Pastor or Bishop	

<b>Part of the Liturgy</b>	<b>Who does it?</b>	<b>Name</b>
Proper Preface	Ordinand, Pastor or Bishop	
Holy, Holy, Holy	Assembly, Ensemble, Choir or Cantor	
Eucharistic Prayer or Words of Institution	Ordinand, Pastor or Bishop	
Lord's Prayer	Assembly	Assembly
Communion	Presider and Assistants	
Lamb of God	Assembly, Ensemble, Choir or Cantor	
Distribution Music	Assembly, Ensemble, Choir or Cantor	
Communion Blessing	Ordinand, Pastor or Bishop	
Post-Communion Song	Assembly, Ensemble, Choir or Cantor	
Post-Communion Prayer	Assisting Minister	
Blessing	Ordinand, Pastor or Bishop	
Sending Song	Assembly	Assembly
Dismissal	Assisting Minister	

## APPENDIX II

### ORDINATION RITE

*Cut and paste the following into the worship bulletin, including the rubrics, so that the text appears in full and without revision. Insert the ordinand's name and revise the "him/her" portions of the rite.*

#### ORDINATION

##### PRESENTATION

I present for ordination to the ministry of word and sacrament, *full name*, who has been prepared, examined, and approved for this ministry and who has been called by the church to this ministry through *name of congregation*.

**C: Thanks be to God.** *(The presenter is seated)*

##### ADDRESS AND QUESTIONS

B: All baptized Christians are called to share in Christ's ministry of love and service in the world, to the glory of God and for the sake of the human family and the whole creation. According to apostolic usage you are now to be entrusted with the office of word and sacrament in the one holy catholic church by the laying on of hands and by prayer.

*A reading from John:* Jesus said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you. Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." (John 20:21-23)

*A reading from Matthew:* Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you; and remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20)

*A reading from First Corinthians:* "I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, 'This is my body that is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." (1 Corinthians 11:23-26)

B: Before almighty God, to whom you must give account, and in the presence of this assembly, I ask: Will you assume this office, believing that the church's call is God's call to the ministry of word and sacrament?

O: I will, and I ask God to help me.

B: The church in which you are to be ordained confesses that the holy scriptures are the word of God and are the norm of its faith and life. We accept, teach, and confess the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds. We also acknowledge the Lutheran confessions as true witnesses and faithful expositions of the holy scriptures. Will you therefore preach and teach in accordance with the holy scriptures and these creeds and confessions?

O: I will, and I ask God to help me.

B: Will you be diligent in your study of the holy scriptures and faithful in your use of the means of grace? Will you pray for God's people, nourish them with the word and holy sacraments, and lead them by your own example in faithful service and holy living?

O: I will, and I ask God to help me.

B: Will you give faithful witness in the world, that God's love may be known in all that you do?

O: I will, and I ask God to help me.

B: Almighty God, who has given you the will to do these things, graciously give you the strength and compassion to perform them.

**C: Amen.**

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

A: With the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, let us pray for the church, those in need, and all of God's creation.

For the holy catholic church, that, filled with your love, it may hunger for truth and thirst after righteousness: God of mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: For all members of the church, that they may serve you in true and godly lives: God of mercy.

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: For *first name*, called to be a pastor in the church, that, sustained by your Holy Spirit, he/she may carry out this ministry with joy and a spirit of bold trust, serve your people, build up your church, and glorify your name: God of mercy.

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: For all pastors; for all deaconesses, diaconal ministers, and associates in ministry; for Mark and Duane, our bishops, that, together with all those responsible for the care and nurture of your people, they may support one another in serving Christ: Lord, in your mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: For the peace of the church, that our divisions may be overcome, so that, united in Christ, we may serve the world and bear witness to the good news: God of mercy,

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: For the nations of the world and their leaders, that they may work for justice and promote the dignity and freedom of every person: God of mercy.

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: For the whole creation, that everything you have made may fulfill your purpose and that we may exercise care for your diverse gifts: God of mercy.

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: For the poor, the persecuted, the sick, the lonely, the forgotten, and all who suffer; for refugees, prisoners, and all who are in danger; that they may be relieved and protected: God of mercy.

**C: hear our prayer.**

A: For the glorious company of all the saints, those who have died in faith and those who live in certain hope, we praise you. That their witness may give us courage until the day of Jesus Christ: God of mercy,

**C: hear our prayer**

B: Into your hands, gracious God, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C: Amen.**

*(Those participating in the laying on of hands come forward and surround ordinand during the following hymn)*

**HYMN OF INVOCATION** “Creator Spirit, Heavenly Dove” 577

**THANKSGIVING** *(Ordinand kneels)*

B: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

B: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**C: It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

B: Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, we bless you for your infinite love in Christ our Lord, in whom we have redemption and forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. We thank you that by his death your Son has overcome death and that, raised by your mighty power, he gives us new life. We praise you that, having ascended into heaven, Christ pours out his gifts abundantly on the church, making some apostles, some prophets, some pastors and teachers, to equip your people for their work of ministry for building up the body of Christ.

*(Hands are laid upon the ordinand)*

Eternal God, through your Son, Jesus Christ, pour out your Holy Spirit upon *first name* and fill him/her with the gifts of grace for the ministry of word and sacrament.

Bless his/her proclamation of your word and administration of your sacraments, so that your church may be gathered for praise and strengthened for service. Make him/her a faithful pastor, patient teacher, and wise counselor. Grant that in all things he/she may serve without reproach, that your people may be renewed and your name be glorified in the church; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

**GIVING OF A STOLE**

*(Ordinand stands and receives the stole as the following words are spoken)*

B: Receive this stole as a sign of your work, and live in obedience to the Lord Jesus, serving his people and remembering his promise: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

**CHARGE**

B: *Hear the words of the apostles:* “Pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called.” (1 Timothy 6:11-12)

*And again:* “Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians, to feed the church of God that he obtained with the blood of his own Son.” (Acts 20:28)

*And again:* “Tend the flock of God that is your charge, not under compulsion but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly. Do not lord it over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that never fades away.” (1 Peter 5:2-4)

*And again:* “Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God’s mysteries. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.” (1 Corinthians 4:1-2)

B: *First name*, care for God’s people, bear their burdens, and do not betray their confidence. So discipline yourself in life and teaching that you preserve the truth, giving no occasion for false security or illusory hope. Witness faithfully in word and deed to all people. Give and receive comfort as you serve within the church. And be of good courage, for God has called you, and your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

## **BLESSING**

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, make you complete in everything good so that you may do God's will, working in you that which is pleasing in God's sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever.

**C: Amen.**

## **ACCLAMATION BY THE ASSEMBLY** *(Congregation stands and newly ordained faces congregation)*

B: Will you, assembled as the people of God and speaking for the whole church, receive *first name* as a messenger of Jesus Christ, sent by God to serve all people with the gospel of hope and salvation? Will you regard him/her as a servant of Christ?

**C: We will, and we ask God to help us.**

B: Will you pray for him/her, help and honor him/her for his/her work's sake, and in all things strive to live together in the peace and unity of Christ?

**C: We will, and we ask God to help us.**

B: Let it be acclaimed that *full name* is a called and ordained a minister in the church of Christ. He/She has Christ's authority to preach the word and administer the sacraments, serving God's people as together we bear God's creative and redeeming love to all the world.

**C: Amen. Thanks be to God.**

*The congregation may offer acclamation with applause.*

## **PEACE**

B: The peace of Christ be with you always.

**C: And also with you.**

*(The ministers, the newly ordained, and the congregation may greet one another in the name of the Lord. Clergy participating in the laying on of hands may greet the newly ordained and return to their seats.)*

## **OFFERING** *(Congregation is seated)*

*The offering received will be given to the Montana Synod to be split between the Montana Synod Fund for Leaders to help current and future students with the cost of their seminary education and First Call Theological Education. Checks should be made payable to the host congregation.*

