

## ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION COMMISSION GUIDELINES

1. Presbytery of the James
2. Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)  
Revised: August 2021  
Revised: November 2025

**BACKGROUND:** The Ordination and/or Installation Commission is a crucial part of the process towards the candidate's installation to the position to which they have been called. Please remember that through this commission, the presbytery directs the process, in consultation with the candidate and the calling entity. It is the duty of the presbytery (G-3.0301c and W-4.4006) to ordain and/or install ministers in their call. However, it is impractical for the presbytery to meet each time a person is ordained and/or installed. The commission, therefore, acts on behalf of the presbytery in ordaining and/or installing the candidate.

We are a diverse presbytery. We have members of many origins, nationalities, ethnicities, and languages. It is important to have the presbytery represented in its richness and variety within the commission.

**REQUIREMENTS for the Ordination and/or Installation Commission:** The Commission on Ministry (COM) liaison, who worked with the pastor or associate pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) that called the pastor/associate pastor will be able to assist the candidate in developing the commission. The candidate should feel free to call upon the COM liaison, vice moderator of COM and/or the stated clerk of the presbytery for assistance.

The "Request to Ordain and/or Install" form (attached) will need to be completed and submitted for approval to the COM's Examinations Committee one week prior to the first Thursday of the month. COM has authority to approve all Commissions to Ordain and/or Install. Please ensure that a copy of your request is at the presbytery office in time for consideration.

"Membership of the Commission: Six persons—three teaching elders and three ruling elders—will compose the commission. These persons are to be members of the Presbytery of the James and shall include the **moderator of the presbytery (or a designated former moderator)**, who shall preside and ask the constitutional questions (Book of Order W-4.0404). The ruling elders are to represent three different congregations, and the ministers are to represent three congregations and/or ministries. The commission should reflect the presbytery's geographical diversity and be both gender-equal and ethnically diverse. Ordinarily, no more than three persons should serve as guests of the commission."

When requesting a commission, the person being installed should first contact the **current moderator of presbytery**, who may, if needed, designate a former moderator to serve in this role.

The stated clerk will need addresses of persons who are not members of the presbytery in order to invite them to serve with the commission after COM approval. Immediate former teaching elders of

the church or validated ministry to which a candidate is being installed are NOT TO BE asked to participate. This includes temporary teaching elders.

**Time, location, and day for the service:** The presbytery shall appoint a time and place for the service. Prior to submitting the “Request to Ordain and/or Install,” the presbytery shall obtain permission from the church session to hold the service. The service may be held at a regular worship hour of the congregation or at another appointed time.

**Order of Service:** There is not a mandated order of service for ordinations and/or installations. However, the following parts of worship shall be included.

- † A person to preside and ask the constitutional questions of the candidate
- † A sermon to be preached
- + Constitutional questions to the congregation
- † A charge to the minister
- † A charge to the congregation

(On the last page of this document, several examples of the Ordination/Installation portion may be found. Consult W-4.4001, 4.4003, 4.4005)

The worship service should be consonant with the Directory for Worship Service for the Lord’s Day. The inclusion of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper is appropriate in ordination and/or installation services.

The candidate may indicate the vestments for the clergy in the “Request to Ordain and/or Install” form (red for the Holy Spirit or the Liturgical season color is appropriate).

**Offering:** Since the ordination/installation service is a service of the presbytery, an offering shall be taken and designated for the Pastoral Care Fund of the presbytery (which assists ministers, educators, and families in difficult financial times).

**Receptions:** Receptions are optional and should be arranged by the local congregation.

**Minutes of the Commission:** Following the Ordination and/or Installation Service, the “Minutes of the Commission” (attached) should be completed by the moderator and/or the clerk of the commission and filed with the stated clerk in the presbytery office. Upon receiving the minutes, the stated clerk will send to the teaching elder a certificate of ordination and/or installation and an official presbytery letter that can serve as proof of your ordination.

**Honoraria and Travel Expenses:** Generally, there are no honoraria given to participants in services or ordination and/or installation. The presbytery will pay travel expense for those persons traveling within the geographical boundaries of the presbytery. Those traveling from outside the geographical boundaries of the presbytery should have travel expenses arranged by the person being ordained and/or installed.

**Ecumenical Guests:** The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is in full communion with the Reformed Church of America, the United Church of Christ, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. To witness to our ecumenical commitments, it is appropriate to invite persons from any of these denominations to serve as guests of the ordination and/or installation commission. They may be asked to take some part in worship leadership.

## **Installation Service Order (W-4.4006)**

Statement of Purpose	Moderator of Commission
Constitutional Questions to the Candidate	Member of Commission
Constitutional Questions to the Congregation	Must be a Ruling Elder
Prayer of Installation (Candidate remains standing)	Member of Commission
Declaration of Installation	Moderator of Commission
Welcome	Commission
Charge to the Teaching Elder	Member of Commission
Charge to the Congregation	Member of Commission
Brief statement	Installed Minister
Benediction	Installed Minister

## **Ordination and Installation Service Order (W-4.4005)**

Statement of Purpose	Moderator of Commission
Constitutional Questions to the Candidate	Member of Commission
Constitutional Questions to the Congregation	Must be a Ruling Elder
Prayer of Ordination/Installation (Candidate kneeling, if able, with laying on of hands; various symbolic images have been used during the pandemic to symbolize the laying on of hands)	Member of Commission
Declaration of Ordination/Installation	Moderator of Commission
Welcome	Commission
Charge to the Teaching Elder	Member of Commission
Charge to the Congregation	Member of Commission
Brief statement	Ordained and Installed Minister
Benediction	Ordained and Installed Minister

## **Ordination Service Order (W-4.4005)**

Statement of Purpose	Moderator of Commission
Constitutional Questions to the Candidate	Moderator of Commission
Prayer of Ordination (Candidate kneeling, if able, with laying on of hands; various symbolic images have been used during the pandemic to symbolize the laying on of hands)	Member of Commission
Declaration of Ordination	Moderator of Commission

## The Presbytery of the James

### Request to Ordain and/or Install

Request is made that presbytery appoint a <u>commission</u> according to G-3.0109b(2):			
Name of person to be ordained and/or installed			
Purpose of the commission (check one)	Ordain only <input type="checkbox"/>	Install only <input type="checkbox"/>	Ordain and install <input type="checkbox"/>
Title of the position the person will hold			
Name of church or organization the person will serve			
Date and time of the ordination and/or installation	Date		Time
Name of the church or other place where the ordination/installation will happen	Name		City/County

Members of the Commission (required)		
Before completing this form, please read the "Ordination and Installation Commission Guidelines." The commission must include the presbytery's current moderator (or vice moderator), who will preside and put the constitutional questions to the candidate/minister. The commission must exhibit gender, ethnic, and geographic diversity.		
Name	Church/Organization	Email
At least three minister members of the Presbytery of the James, representing three different churches or ministries.		
At least three ruling elders from three different congregations in the Presbytery of the James.		

Guests of the Commission (optional)		
Ordinarily no more than three persons should serve as guests of the commission.		
Name	Presbytery/Denomination/Organization	Email

Assignments			
Enter the names of persons listed above who will have the specified functions.			
Name of Person	Required Tasks	Name of Person	Other Tasks (optional)
	Moderate, preside, put the constitutional questions		
	Preach the sermon		
	Charge the minister		
	Charge the congregation (required only if the candidate/minister is being installed)		

Other Requests (optional)
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Celebration of the Lord's Supper?		Preferred vestments for those who lead the service?	
Other?			

NOTE: This form should be completed by the person to be ordained/installed in consultation with the session(s) involved and sent to the stated clerk of the Presbytery of the James before the first Thursday of the month. **Persons designated should have been consulted about their availability to serve with this commission.**