[CHURCH NAME]

Ordination Policy & Procedure (Sample)

POLICY STATEMENT

[Church Name] has the ordaining authority. Ordination is neither a right nor an entitlement to be claimed by an individual. A church prayerfully ordains, not to endow with power nor to confer social status, but as a public affirmation of what God has already done. A church chooses to ordain a person because they have discerned evident of a Godly call, have witnessed gifts of ministry, have seen satisfactory preparation for ministry, and accept the candidate to minister among them.

[Church Name] affirm that ordination requires the candidate for ordination is serving in a place of service, i.e. an American Church or other ABC Ministry. Because ordination is the process that a church enters to affirm the calling, giftedness, and service of the candidate, ordination cannot be detached from a place of service.

[Church Name] may license individuals for a variety of reasons. Example: Licensure may affirm a specialized kind of ministry (Children's Ministry, Men's Ministry, Home Visitation, etc.) or be part of sending a student to seminary. However, [Church Name] does not treat licensure as a necessary pre-requisite for ordination. Likewise, there are circumstances in which a "commission" rather than an ordination or license may be appropriate (e.g., a short term mission trip).

The most important prerequisite for ordination, the call of God to a specialized ministry, does not readily yield itself to particular standards that a denomination or local congregation might establish. This is why the call must be tested by other prerequisites or standards, especially those having to do with education standards, evidence of gifts and character for ministry, clarity about the proposed type of service in which the candidate intends to serve as an ordained minister.

PROCEDURE

[Church Name] affirm that ordination requires the candidate for ordination is serving in a place of service, i.e. an American Church or other ABC Ministry. Ordination is the process that a church enters to affirm the calling, giftedness, and service of the one serving. Therefore, it cannot be detached from a place of service.

Role of the Church Congregation

- The appropriate board or committee of the church to which the candidate belongs shall meet with the candidate to gain information as to eligibility for ordination.
- The appropriate committee and the Pastor, if they consider the candidate ready for ordination, shall recommend that the Council on Ministerial Standing and Ordination (COMSAO) meet with the individual prior to the Ministry Committee's ordination examination counsel. The appropriate local church committee shall supply, or take steps to supply, the COMSAO with all the information at its disposal.
- The committee will follow its own procedures for examination of the candidate and making a recommendation to the church.
- A date for ordination and order of service can then be set by the candidate and the church.

Role of the Candidate

After conferring with his/her Pastor, the candidate should seek counseling from his/her minister as to procedures leading to ordination.

The candidate shall be responsible for:

- Submitting documents as required by the COMSAO.
- An official transcript from all schools attended that documents successful completion of work and graduation (if appropriate).
- Providing written references as required by COMSAO.

The candidate should inform the appropriate church committee and leaders concerning his/her readiness to proceed with the ordination process.

The candidate may select a sponsor. The role of the sponsor is to be advocate for the candidate as they share their theological stance and concept of ministry in meetings before COMSAO and examination councils.

Abbreviated Steps to Ordination

1. Church and candidate meet to review procedures and establish a course of action. *Application materials will not be sent to candidates without the authorization of a minister.*
2. Application materials are submitted to COMSAO. These include: [list all materials here].
3. COMSAO meets with the candidate after all the application materials are received. This interview is not to be confused with the "examination" (except for those who have been previously ordained in another denomination, or those seeking Privilege of Call).
   The Work of COMSAO is credentialing by:
   a. Assuring that all the documentation is in order.
   b. Questioning about ethical boundary issues and fitness for ministry.
   c. Ascertaining the congeniality of the person for ministry in [Church Name].
   d. Reviewing the Ordination Paper with the primary intent of helping prepare the candidate for the Examination Council.
   e. Establishing personal and professional relationship with the candidate.

4. COMSAO makes recommendation to the appropriate committee.
5. The committee convenes an Examination Council.
6. The Examination Council announces its findings and recommendation.
7. The church plans and conducts ordination service, then reports it to the committee.

Revised: _____