

CHAPTER 13

THE ORDINATION AND/OR INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

13-1 The Ordination and Installation of Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders, and Deacons¹⁰⁶

A. Teaching Elders

1. Ordinarily, the ordaining/installing Presbytery will appoint an administrative commission¹⁰⁷ to conduct a worship service at a date and time approved by the Court. A sermon suitable to the occasion shall be preached. The person presiding shall recount the conditions necessary for ordination and/or installation, the solemnity of the event, and its importance in the life of the Church.
2. Presbyteries may also directly ordain a Teaching Elder.

B. Ruling Elders and Deacons

Ordinarily, the Session will ordain Ruling Elders and Deacons at a regular or special service of worship. The person presiding, normally the Moderator of Session,¹⁰⁸ shall recount the conditions necessary for ordination and/or installation, the solemnity of the event, and its importance in the life of the Church.

13-2 Administration of vows and questions

A. Ordination vows

The person presiding shall administer the following ordination vows for those being ordained and for those coming into the Evangelical Presbyterian Church from some other denomination:

1. Do you reaffirm your faith in Jesus Christ as your own personal Lord and Savior?
2. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, totally trustworthy, fully inspired by the Holy Spirit, the supreme, final, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
3. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the **Westminster Confession of Faith** and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures?
4. Do you promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with the system of doctrine as taught in the Scriptures and as contained in the **Westminster Confession of Faith** and the Catechisms of this Church you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Presbytery the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
5. Do you affirm and adopt the “*Essentials of Our Faith*” without exception?
6. Do you subscribe to the government and discipline of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church?
7. Do you promise subjection to your fellow Presbyters in the Lord?¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ A *Handbook of Procedures, Service, and Forms*, is currently under development

¹⁰⁷ G.21-1C

¹⁰⁸ G.18-2A

¹⁰⁹ For Deacons, the vow is “Do you promise subjection to your fellow Church Officers in the Lord?” (G.13-7B)

8. Have you been induced, as far as you know your own heart, to seek the office of the holy Ministry from love to God and a sincere desire to promote His glory in the gospel of His Son?
9. Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in promoting the truths of the gospel and the purity and peace of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account?

B. Installation vows:

The person presiding shall administer the following installation vows for those being installed to office in an EPC congregation:

1. Will you seek to be faithful and diligent in the exercise of all your duties as a Christian and a Teaching Elder/Ruling Elder/Deacon, whether personal, or interpersonal, private or public; and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the gospel in your manner of life, and to walk with exemplary piety before the congregation of which God is making you overseer?
2. Are you now willing to accept the call of this church as Pastor/Associate Pastor/Ruling Elder/Deacon, and, relying upon God for strength, promise to discharge to it the duties required of that office?¹¹⁰

C. Questions to the congregation

When the person being ordained has responded affirmatively to these vows, the person presiding shall address the following questions to the congregation:

1. Are you, the members of this congregation ready to receive _____ as your (*name of office to which the person is being ordained/installed*)?
2. Do you promise to submit to _____ in matters of spiritual discipline, and to receive with humility and love the word of truth?
3. Do you promise to support _____ (*name*) with your prayers, to give encouragement and assistance in every way as _____ (*name*) seeks to instruct you in the things of the Lord and to lead you in the building of the Kingdom of God in this place?
4. Do you commit yourselves to fulfill the terms of the call you have extended and to make provision for _____ (*name*) needs that the name of Christ might be glorified?

13-3 The Act of Ordination

- A.** Following the congregation's affirmation, those being ordained shall kneel and members of the ordaining court or Commission shall lay hands on the Ordinand(s).
- B.** An appropriate prayer shall be offered and the Ordinand(s) shall thereby be set apart to the office of Teaching Elder/Ruling Elder/Deacon.
- C.** The presiding person shall state: "By the authority of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church and the Presbytery of _____, I declare that _____ has been ordained to the office of (Teaching Elder/Ruling Elder/Deacon), and that he/she has been duly and properly installed as (Pastor/Associate Pastor/Assistant Pastor/Ruling Elder/Deacon) of this congregation, in accord with the Word of God and the laws of this Church. As such _____ (*name*) is entitled to be given support, encouragement, honor,

¹¹⁰ In the case of an Assistant Pastor, the phrase "Are you now willing to accept the call of the Session as Assistant Pastor..." is appropriate