

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
Sunday, January 7th, 2024
Rev. Gerry Gallant

Baptism of the Lord_ Ordination of Elders
Titus 1:5-9

Welcome

Announcements

Call to Worship

Praise the LORD, my soul;
all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

**Praise the LORD, my soul,
and forget not all his benefits.**

Praise the LORD, you his angels,
you mighty ones who do his bidding,
who obey his word.

**Praise the LORD, all his heavenly hosts,
you his servants who do his will.**

Praise the LORD, all his works
everywhere in his dominion.

Praise the LORD, my soul.

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

Dear God,
help us to worship you today.
May we listen carefully, pray honestly, and sing joyfully.
Send your Holy Spirit
so that our words will bring you glory.
Thank you that Jesus makes our worship perfect for you.
Help us remember that when we worship you,
we are part of your family;
we join everyone who loves you
around the world and throughout history.
In Jesus' name we pray. **Amen.**

Opening Hymn #172: “As With Gladness Men of Old” (V 1,4,5)

As with gladness men of old
 did the guiding star behold;
 as with joy they hailed its light,
 leading onward, beaming bright:
 so, most gracious Lord, may we
 ever more be led to thee.

Holy Jesus, every day
 keep us in the narrow way,
 and when earthly things are past,
 bring our ransomed souls at last
 where they need no star to guide,
 where no clouds of glory hide.

In that heavenly country bright
 need they no created light:
 thou its light, its joy, its crown,
 thou its sun which goes not down;
 there forever may we sing
 hallelujahs to our King.

Call to Confession

Prepare the way of the Lord!
 Let us make our confession to God.

Prayer of Confession

Gracious God,
 our sins are too heavy to carry,
 too real to hide,
 and too deep to undo.
 Forgive what our lips tremble to name,
 what our hearts can no longer bear,
 and what has become for us
 a consuming fire of judgment.
 Set us free from a past that we cannot change;
 open to us a future in which we can be changed;
 and grant us grace
 to grow more and more in your likeness and image;
 through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen

Assurance of Pardon

Hear these comforting words:

If you repent and believe in God's redeeming mercy,
your sins are forgiven.

Trust in God's promises and begin anew your life
with God and all people
in the name of Jesus Christ

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,
Forever and ever. Amen.**

Music Ministry: "Light of the World"

Responsive Reading

Genesis 1:1-5

1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness.

5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Children's Hymn #300: "Father, We Love You"

Father, we love You
We worship and adore You
Glorify Your name in all the earth
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name in all the earth

Jesus, we love You
We worship and adore You
Glorify Your name in all the earth
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name
Glorify Your name in all the earth

Spirit, we love You
 We worship and adore You
 Glorify Your name in all the earth
 Glorify Your name
 Glorify Your name
 Glorify Your name in all the earth

Children's Lesson

Prayer for illumination **(Congregant Prepared)**

Scripture

Titus 1:5-9

⁵ This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— ⁶ if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷ For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸ but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹ He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

Sermon

While Jesus Christ walked among mankind, he gathered his disciples and spent his time walking among the common peoples. Instead of coming to the kings of the nations and the lords of the land, he brought his message to fishermen, tax collectors, prostitutes, friends of lepers, and others who were often considered the outcasts of society.

Daily, many of these people followed Jesus during his three and a half year ministry here on earth. Walking with him, eating with him, listening to each and every word, these men and women had the privilege of learning God's truth from the very lips of God himself. Yet, it was not until after his crucifixion and resurrection, when he spent just forty more days living with them and giving them instruction that they finally began to understand who he really was, the son of God.

However, even after his glorious ascension, Jesus did not leave his followers, he left them an indescribable gift, one that would help to walk the path of the disciples in this fallen world, one that would help guide them to the truth of God's Word, The Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit has many tasks in this world, but one of them, is to ensure that the truth of God, the good news of the Gospel, is passed on from generation to generation in this world, until the events that are described in the book of Revelation take place and Jesus Christ returns to claim his eternal kingdom.

God, in his wisdom, provided the apostles the foundational role of teaching and understating discipleship, the church, and God's truths.

The main role that many of God's earliest followers held was that of the 'ministry of the Word'. They were given the responsibility of faithfully proclaiming the sharing of the Word of God with unbelievers. They were called to share the Gospel and the truth of who Jesus Christ was with people who had no idea who he was. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, they proclaimed all that they had learned as they had walked alongside Jesus in this world, bringing the truth to Jew and Gentile alike.

Since that time, there have been more than 104,340 Sundays, that means close to 10,000 generations of families, more than 2 million shared meals among people. We are no longer hearing the Word of God from the very people who walked along his side and witnessed the miracles and heard the teachings from the lips of God himself. So how are we to trust that we are taught today, the same things that those first teachers taught so long ago?

Afterall, we do not want to be led astray, we do not want to miss out on eternal life in the kingdom of heaven. We want to know the truth and we want to be able to share the truth of God's Word with others so that they too can know of the saving grace of Jesus Christ, so they too can enjoy his blessing and they too can walk as the Salt and Light of God's Word in this darkened world.

What a complex and amazing responsibility God has placed upon His people to take care of his Truth in this world.

Afterall, people are motivated and driven by their own desires and hidden agendas. Some people are not very smart, and others are too smart for their own good. Then you have people who are selfish, or pre-occupied with other things, you have people who are greedy, or uncaring or self-serving.

This is why we need to always go back to the Scriptures, to the teachings of those who walked with God and understood and proclaimed his Truth to the first believers. This is why God sent the Holy Spirit to be with them and guide them to His truth and to help them proclaim that truth regardless of the circumstances of life that they found themselves in. This is why God's people have always been a people who have taken God's truths and faithfully written them down with care and attention so that Future generations could know the truth.

At the conclusion of the book of John, he recorded.

John 21:24-25

²⁴This is the disciple who is bearing witness about these things, and who has written these things, and we know that his testimony is true.

²⁵Now there are also many other things that Jesus did. Were every one of them to be written, I suppose that the world itself could not contain the books that would be written.

When we read about the life and teachings of Jesus Christ in the Gospels or the continuation of the church in the book of Acts and the rest of the New Testament, we are reading the truth, as it was proclaimed to those who knew the Son of God personally.

God has always been with his people through the power of the Holy Spirit and he is just as much here today as he was 2000 years ago. He is always seeking and calling people to himself through his son Jesus Christ, who is the way, the truth, and the life. The only way to the kingdom of God is through Jesus Christ, there is no other way and that is a truth that the first followers of Christ taught, and it should still be the message of the Church today.

To keep the integrity of his church and his truth through history, God has called people to be Elders and shepherd of His church, people who will do as the early disciples did and proclaim the truth of God regardless of the circumstances that they might find themselves in, which is what we are learning about in the book of Titus today.

Titus 1:5-9

⁵This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order, and appoint elders in every town as I directed you— ⁶if anyone is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. ⁷For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, ⁸but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. ⁹He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.

One of the primary functions of someone called to the office of eldership is found in the ninth verse, **'He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.'**

An Elder is entrusted with holding to, guarding, and protecting the 'trustworthy word', that is the truths that are taught about Jesus, the Son of God in the church. Elders in the church are given the responsibility of protecting and preserving the treasure that is the

Gospel, the Good News of Salvation through Jesus Christ, that has been taught since the disciples walked with Him 2000 years ago.

Now an Elder is defined as being a leader in the local church, and there are many different kinds of Elders, or as some call them servant-leaders. And each of these Elders serves an important function in the Church and in the family of God.

There are several different words that are used, sometime interchangeably, to describe what we call Elders in the church. Some of them that you might be familiar with are bishop, presbyter, shepherd or even pastor. There are also many other words that exists in other Christian traditions and throughout history that are used to describe the people who are Elders of the church.

The Greek Bible however only has three main words that are translated into the many different English words used to describe Elders.

Poimainoi – The Shepherd, the Pastor, The Teaching Elder, a person who is responsible for the education, guidance, and care of a Christian congregation.

Episkopi – The Bishop, The Overseer, The Caregiver, a person who is responsible for the care of a group of people or individuals. What is interesting is that while many churches use this as a title of authority within their structure, the meaning is more closely related to the responsibility of looking after others than having authority over them.

Presbuteros – The Presbyter, The Elder – a person of responsibility and influence in the community.

Notice how each of these words deals more with the relationship of the Elder with others than the power or authority that they hold over people within the church. These are the words that Jesus and the writers of the Scriptures used to describe the people who would care for the church.

All three of these forms of eldership are given the responsibility of protecting and preserving the truth of God's Word in this world. However, that is not their only responsibility, as you can see these three types of Elders, the Shepherd, the Caregiver, and the Presbyter, are also responsible for the care and protection of the flock as well.

The reality is that the duty of protecting and preserving the truth of God's Word and the care and protection of God's people go hand in hand. When a church has sound doctrine and sound teachings, it will have a congregation that is living out the Word of God in their lives and it is the job of the Elders to ensure that the church is sound not only in what it believes and teaches, but also in how it lives within the lives of its members and in the community around it.

The truth of the message of Salvation, the Gospel, changes people's lives when the power of the Holy Spirit falls upon them. It is the one truth that sits above every other truth in this world, and it is meant to be proclaimed truthfully to the unbelieving world today, just like it was proclaimed truthfully to the unbelieving world 2000 years ago.

And the Elder is a critical component of the church's capability to continue to proclaim the truth. Elders have the responsibility to guide the church to hold fast to the truth of the scripture and live according to its teachings in a world that seeks to constantly change the meaning of God's Word and conform it to the world's sinful ways.

This is why Paul carefully describes who an Elder is supposed to be within the church. The truth is that while anyone can be an Elder not everyone should be an Elder. Paul describes some of the qualities that the church should look for in those who desire to be Elders within the church.

They can be broken down into two categories, experience, and character.

Paul points out in Titus that an Elder should be experienced in life; elder, or older, that they should have children, that they should be above reproach and able to give instruction. If we look at the description in 1 Timothy would add that they should not be a new convert, because they need to be grounded in their understanding of Scripture.

The very nature of the word Elder would imply that someone needs to be older, have some life experience, someone who knows the difference between theory and reality we could say. To be an Elder means that they have walked the road of life for some time, now the Bible does not specify how long, but it needs to be long enough that they can offer empathy and leadership to those who are still walking the road of life behind them.

Age is something that does not always get the respect it deserves in our culture. We forget that age brings wisdom, the combination of knowledge and experience. And the only way to get experience in life is by living it.

There are many churches out there making people in their early 20's Presbyters, Caregivers and even Shepherds. These young people may seem like brightly burning flames in the darkness of the world around them, but the reality is that they have not been tested, and when the trials and tribulations come, when the pressures of society bear down upon them, they do not hold fast to the truths of the Scriptures.

To be an Elder as described in the Scripture you need to be someone that people turn to in trouble and when in crisis, someone who naturally acts as a shepherd, caregiver, and presbyter. I don't know many people in their early 20's that I would go to for advice on my marriage, or finances, not because of their inability to advise, but because of their lack of experience in those areas.

To be an Elder requires walking with God for a long time, having their relationship with the Lord challenged, put through trials and tribulations, so that they are examples of spiritual growth and maturity. So that the elderly can offer advice from experience to those who are walking through similar trials and tribulations in their lives.

To be an Elder requires being around the devil for a long time and knowing his tricks. This means that they need to be wise to the schemes of the devil and wise in the wisdom of the Lord. They need to be able to give people practical advice in dealing with the trials, tribulations, and temptations that they are bound to come across in their walk with the Lord.

This means that they need to be able to **'give instruction in sound doctrine'**. The source of all Christian doctrine, all Christian teachings is the Scripture. The Bible is the book that fully describes God's relationship with his people from the beginning of times in Genesis until the end of times in Revelation. It teaches us everything that Jesus taught about living in relationship with him. It reminds us that Jesus came, he taught, he was crucified and resurrected, and he now sits as the head of the Church.

All of the Old Testament points of the coming of Christ, and the New Testament shares the details of his life, and the continued influence that it is meant to have on the people of this world through His body the Church. It teaches of the life changing presence of the Holy Spirit in those who are God's children and how they live in a personal relationship with God as they walk as his disciples in this broken world.

An Elder possesses as some level the ability to teach the Bible to others. This does not mean that every Elder needs to be able to get up and teach the Scriptures in the form of a sermon on a Sunday. It also does not mean that every Elder needs to be capable of teaching a Bible study, or leading a devotional, or even a small study group.

What it does mean is that they need to be able to share about the truth of the Gospel in their lives, not just on Sunday mornings. They need to live as examples of Christ in their day to day walk with the Lord in the interactions, in their job and even when they are in private. We teach the world more about God by the way we act as Christians than by the words we use.

Which is why it calls for the Elder to be **'the husband of one wife'**. This does not demand that every Elder in the church needs to be male or married. It means that they need to be faithful people. Faithful to their spouse, or their boyfriend or girlfriend, faithful to God.

There are churches out there who teach that if a man or woman is divorced, they are disqualified from eldership. And while it is true that divorce is something that Christians should try to avoid, it is not always unavoidable, and in some cases is advisable.

However, you will notice that the words 'can not be divorced' do not appear in the Scripture. The words are 'the **husband of one wife**' stressing the importance of faithfulness to one's spouse, faithfulness which is a vital characteristic of Elders.

The concern seems to stem from the phrase '**above reproach**' especially as people outside of the church know and understand the Elder. Divorce itself does not bring the condemnation of others in this world, the same way it did not in Jesus's day. Remember when he spoke to the woman at the well who had 5 husbands, he did not condemn her for having 5 husbands, he did however question why she was not faithfully married to the man that she was currently with.

The world does not question loyalty and faithfulness, it does question unfaithfulness.

So what Paul is emphasizing in Titus is a healthy relationship that is unmarred by infidelity. A relationship that is built upon that foundation of faithfulness, a trusting, steadfast, committed love, the same trusting, steadfast, committed love we are called to have for God in our lives.

An Elder need to be someone who is well thought of, committed in their relationships. If they are married and have children, we should be sure that their children are Christian.

An Elder's experience in life, in relationships and in raising children will help them guide others through the trials, tribulations and challenges of going through the same or similar things in their lives.

Elders are people who have been called in service in God's church because of the experience and the character that they possess. The truth is that not a single Elder in all of recorded history has been a perfect person. Not one of them is capable of living up to the description of what an Elder is called to be in every single aspect of their lives.

Yet they are people that God has called, each according to their gifts and strengths, to serve a purpose in the church that was established by Jesus Christ here on earth.

Each called to live in relationship with God, to love Him with heart, soul, body, and mind, and to love their neighbor like themselves.

They are to be the Shepherds, the Caregivers, and the Presbyters of the congregation, each serving in the capacity they are called with the gifts God has given them.

Being an Elder is not a title, it is a journey, a walk with God, in service and humility, in an authentic loving relationship with God's people.

May we uphold our Elders in prayer, honor them for their service and offer them our support in committees and events as they serve this critical role of protecting and proclaiming the truth of the Scriptures and protect and care for God's people in His Church.

Let us pray,

Our High Priest and Shepherd

We thank you with our whole heart,
 O beloved Father,
 for the precious blood of your dear Son,
 which he shed for our sake,
 and by which you daily cleanse, quicken, and sanctify us
 in your holy Church,
 and make us partakers of your divine nature.
 We thank you for the great and unspeakable love,
 though we were not worthy of it,
 when you redeemed us by your own Son,
 who is our High priest and Mediator,
 the true Shepherd who laid down his life for the sheep of his flock,
 who now sits on your right hand
 and intercedes for us.
 O good and faithful God, Friend of all mankind,
 give us your grace and your great compassion,
 that we may praise you with your Son and the Holy Spirit
 in every act of our lives evermore.
Amen.

Hymn #181: "All Praise to You, O Lord" (V 1,3,4)

All praise to you, O Lord,
 who by your mighty power
 did manifest your glory forth
 in Cana's marriage hour.

Oh, may this grace be ours,
 in you always to live
 and drink of those refreshing streams
 which you alone can give.

So, led from strength to strength,
 grant us, O Lord, to see
 the marriage supper of the Lamb,
 the great epiphany.

Invitation to Offering

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3). We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer:

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewspert offering@gmail.com If you have an Offering Envelope #, please include it in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (e.g., Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.

Offertory Prayer

(Congregant Prepared)

Order for the Ordination and Admission of Ruling Elders

The Ordination and Admission of Ruling Elders shall form part of the public worship of the Congregation.

It is appropriate for the session to meet briefly with elders-elect before a service of ordination to offer prayer with them and to enter the church with them. They may sit in their usual places until it is time for the ordination to occur.

The ordination normally follows the sermon and offering.

Let us pray,
 Great and marvelous are Your works Lord God Almighty;
 just and true are your ways, King of saints.
 Who shall not revere You, O Lord, and glorify Your name?
 For You only are holy, all nations shall come and worship before You
 For Your judgments are made manifest.
 Blessed are You, O Christ,
 who has born our humanity into the holy of holies;
 and who, being ascended,
 leads captivity captive and pours down heavenly gifts upon the children of God
 You are our righteous Judge, and our most faithful Intercessor,
 Glory be unto You
 In heaven and in earth,
 In eternal unity with the Father and with the Spirit.

Amen.

THE PREAMBLE

All ministries of the Church proceed from and are sustained by the ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is our Prophet, Priest and King, the Minister of the covenant of grace. By the operation of God's Word and Spirit, the Church is gathered, equipped, and sent out to participate in this ministry. All members of the Church are called to share the Gospel with the world, and to offer to the Father the worship and service that are due to the Creator from the creation, through Christ, the only Mediator, until he comes again. That the Church may be continually renewed and nurtured for ministry, Christ furnishes the Church with pastors and teachers. He requires and enables the Church to discern and to confirm by ordination those whom he calls to this pastoral and teaching office. The standards of His Church He entrusts in a special degree of responsibility to their care.

The Perth Community Church is bound only to Jesus Christ. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as testimony to Him, are the canon and the doctrine, by which He rules our faith and life. We acknowledge our historic continuity with the Holy Catholic Church Reformed and with her doctrinal heritage.

Our Subordinate standards are the Westminster Confession of Faith, as well as the Westminster Shorter and Larger Catechisms. We recognize that just as there are some central and foundational truths of the gospel affirmed by Christians everywhere, so too there are particular understandings of the gospel that define the Presbyterian and Reformed tradition. All Christians must affirm the central mysteries¹ of the faith, and all those who are called to ordered ministries in a Presbyterian church must also affirm the essential teachings of the Reformed tradition.

The Form of Presbyterian Church Government of the Westminster Assembly reminds us that Christ has furnished some in the Church, beside the Ministers of the Word, with gifts for government and with commission to execute the same, when called thereunto, who are to join with the Minister in the government of the church, which officers reformed churches commonly call Elders.

The Fathers of the Scottish Reformation in 1560 declared, 'As the Word of God is the life and soul of this Church, so godly Order and Discipline is as it were sinews in the Body, which knit and join members together in decent order and comeliness'.

The duties of a Ruling Elder are:

To be an example in the Church and to all of Christian faith, knowledge, and behavior in all public and private relations.

To share with the Minister and the other Ruling Elders in the Gospel discipline and pastoral care of the Congregation, and in the work of training and leading Christ's People in their mission to the community, the nation, and the world.

To represent the Congregation when so commissioned.

The clerk of the board shall invite the elders-elect to come forward and stand before the minister. The elders of the board will form a second semi-circle behind them. The clerk will present the elders-elect to the minister, saying:

The Board of Elders of Perth Community Church has invited the following to be members of the Board _____, _____, _____, appointed to the ministry of government among you in the Church of Jesus Christ.

The Perth Community Church, being persuaded by their personal faith in Christ, their Christian character and their gifts has decided to admit them to the office of Ruling Elder. These chosen disciples have accepted the call as from the King and Head of all Government. Authority to participate in the government of the Church is conferred by ordination.

The minister shall say:

It is now my duty to set them apart before God and the world to the office of ruling in the Gospel, and to admit them to the Board of Elders of this congregation.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, you have heard the call of Christ and His Church to this office of Ruling Elder and have signified your acceptance of the call.

THE VOWS

Then the Minister, addressing the elders-elect, who are to stand and make answer to the question put to them, shall say:

To the end that your faith in God and your integrity of purpose may be declared before Him and all the world you are required to give answer to the following

questions appointed by the Perth Community Church for all who would enter the governmental office of the Ruling Eldership.

Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and duty?

I DO

Do you believe the Westminster Confession of Faith, as adopted by the Perth Community Church, to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God, and do you promise to faithfully adhere to its teachings?

I DO

Do you believe the government of the Perth Community Church to be founded on and agreeable to the Word of God and do you engage as a Ruling Elder of this Church to maintain and defend the same?

I DO

Do you own the purity of worship at present authorized by this Church, and do you undertake to conform thereto?

I DO

In accepting the office of Elder, do you engage, in the strength and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, faithfully and diligently to perform the duties thereof; watching over the flock of which you are called to be an overseer, and in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works.

I DO

THE ORDINATION

The elder's elect will kneel down (or be seated as circumstances dictate) to be ordained.

You will now kneel down (be seated), as in the presence of our Great King and Chief Shepherd that by prayer you may be offered up to become His servants in the Government of that People which He has purchased with His own blood.

The Congregation will stand. The gathered elders will lay hands upon the elders-elect and pray. At an appropriate time, the minister will say;

Let us pray,

Almighty Lord, Prophet, Priest and King,
 Fountain of Faith
 Foundation of all right order and government
 Who by the power of Thy Word
 And the inspiration of Thy Holy Spirit
 Dost rule Thy Church
 And hast appointed therein the ministry of faithful disciples
 To guard and guide Thy Flock by the Gospel
 Accept these disciples to be Ruling Elders in Thy Sovereign name.
 Set them apart by the anointing of Thy Holy Spirit
 To be under shepherds in the Church
 Grant them Thy truth and grace
 Save them from pride, self-righteousness, sloth, ignorance
 Uncertainty, discouragement, and the fear of the world.
 Endue them with Thy holy wisdom and Thy Steadfastness
 That they may rule in Thy fear
 For the salvation of your children and the purification of the Church's life
 May their lives and words adorn the Gospel
 And speak of Thy glorious kingdom among all peoples
 Make them faithful unto death
 That when Thou shalt come as our Chief Shepherd and only Judge
 Each one will receive Thy recognition;
 Well done. Good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of the Lord.
Amen.

THE DECLARATION

The newly ordain elders shall stand and the minister will address the newly ordained elders and all gathered elders.

Brothers and Sisters in Christ: In the name of the King and Head of the Church and by the authority of the Board of Elders I do now admit you to our number and to the exercise of your high office in this congregation.

I charge you to be faithful to Christ in all things.

THE CONGREGATION

The minister will turn to the congregation.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, beloved disciples of God; In the same way that the newly elected elders offer up their lives to our Lord Jesus Christ for the nurture of the Church and the increase of God's Word in the world, you are committed to a corresponding obedience in the Lord for the fulfillment of your own

ministry. As I put to you the following questions, you will signify your assent by saying, we do.

Do you renew your allegiance to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord, as your Prophet, Priest and King?

We Do

Do you receive these your governors as from Christ, and offer them your obedience in the Lord?

We Do

Do you pledge yourselves anew as Christians to be fellow servants with them under Christ, standing together for the defense of the confirmation of the Gospel, and going forth into the world by the power of the Holy Spirit?

We Do

THE PRAYER

The minister will lead with a prayer.

Almighty and most merciful God,
 Of whose help and guidance, we ever stand in need
 Bestow upon us these blessings.
 We beseech You
 That we may grow in the knowledge of Your will,
 And increase in spiritual wisdom,
 Strengthen us with might by Your Spirit,
 That each in his office may serve you faithfully all their days
 And inherit that blessed life which you have promised to your people,
 Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen.

The congregation shall say conclude with the following prayer, in unison:

God of Grace, who baptized us into a common ministry as ambassadors of Christ;
 who called us to be a priesthood of all believers;
 who entrusted to us the message of reconciliation;

we pray for courage and discipline to follow where your elders rightly lead us, that together we may declare your mighty acts and show your love to the world; through Jesus Christ who is ruler of all. **Amen.**

Thereafter the Minister shall add these words:

Let us welcome our new Ruling Elders through the token of the right hand of fellowship. May the Lord bless you and give you grace to keep these vows.

THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP

The minister and other members of the session shall give the newly ordained elders the right hand of fellowship.

THE CONCLUSION

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all, **Amen.**

All may be seated, and the service of worship shall continue.

Closing Hymn #299: “Holy, Holy, Holy” (V 1,2,3)

Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy! merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!

Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee,
casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
cherubim and seraphim, falling down before Thee,
which wert and art and evermore shalt be.

Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide Thee,
though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
only Thou art holy, there is none beside Thee,
perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.

Pastoral Prayer

Praise the Lord!
Our soul praises you, O Lord.

We will sing praises to you as long as we live.
We will not put our trust in our government or in influential people,
for when they die, their influence and power are gone.
We are blessed because we hope and trust in you,
O God who created the world and everything in it.
You were a faithful God to our spiritual fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
and you remain unchanging and faithful to us in this century
and on to the end of time.
You uphold those of us
who are weighed down with the cares of this world,
and you feed those who are hungry with the bread of life.
You set prisoners free with the assurance that their sins are forgiven
and that you are in control of the events of their lives.
You give sight of understanding to those who are blind in their sin.
You lift up those who are bowed down,
and you love those who are righteous.
You watch over us aliens in a sinful world,
and you are a father to the orphaned and a comforter to the widowed.
You do not allow the plans of the wicked
to flourish or to come to completion.
You will reign forever and for all generations.
Praise the Lord! **Amen.**

Benediction

May the grace of Christ, which daily renews us,
and the love of God, which enables us to love all,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which unites us in one body,
make us eager to obey the will of God until we meet again,
through Jesus Christ, our Lord.