

## **Ordination and Licensing**

*1 Among the prophets and teachers of the church at Antioch of Syria were Barnabas, Simeon (called “the black man”), Lucius (from Cyrene), Manaen (the childhood companion of King Herod Antipas), and Saul. 2 One day as these men were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Appoint Barnabas and Saul for the special work to which I have called them.” 3 So after more fasting and prayer, the men laid their hands on them and sent them on their way. Acts 13: 13*

*The general purpose of the ordination and licensing process is as follows:*

1. To recognize and confirm that an individual has been called by God to ministry.
2. To acknowledge that the individual has gone through a period of discernment and training related to this call.
3. To authorize that individual to take on the office of pastoral ministry.

### **The Purpose of Ordination**

Ordination is the communal recognition of persons set apart for leadership and pastoral responsibility. The work of the 'ordained' is not about privilege or power, it is “call” to serve the church. “Call” is grounded in servant-leadership modeled by Jesus Christ’s example to His disciples. In the midst of the disciples bickering over who would be the greatest, as well as their final meal with Jesus, “...he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.” (John 13:4-5) Jesus gave the example of those set apart for the work of God, would be grounded in service.

To be ordained, is to be called to a responsibility to equip, lead, teach and shepherd God’s people. Those entering into the process and seeking ordination should do so counting the cost; committing to a lifetime of conscious living of the whole gospel, and joyfully embracing God's calling. The covenant of ordained ministry is a lifetime commitment, and those who enter into it dedicate their whole lives to the personal and spiritual disciplines it requires.

At Christ Church, ordination is a formal setting apart persons for leading the community in Word (teaching and preaching the Bible), Sacrament (overseeing the practice of baptism and communion) and Order (giving leadership and form to the church’s life) Persons apply, are examined, and after recommendation of the Sr. Staff, HR Committee and approval of the Leadership Council, are ordained before

the community of faith.

Complete education, experience and examination requirements are included below, and application documents included in appendix III. The Leadership Council reserves the right to grant waivers for qualifications for justified special circumstances.

### **Ordination**

The Leadership Council may ordain a person as a minister of the Gospel after first examining the applicant's background, moral and religious character, previous education, and ministry experience. Those who are ordained have responsibility for teaching, preaching, weddings, funerals, sacraments as well as oversight of other ministry staff including Licensed Pastors, as assigned. Final determination regarding qualification for ordination shall belong to the Leadership Council. Those ordained by Christ Church shall have their credentials and standing *reviewed* annually, by the Leadership Council for continuation or discontinuation at Christ Church. Ordination is considered a lifelong designation and responsibility. The ordination process is for individuals on the Christ Church staff that have a missional role for serving in a pastoral context. Exceptions may be made in unusual circumstances.

### **The Purpose of Licensing**

There may be those who do not feel called to pursue the educational requirements of ordination but feel called to additional ministry responsibility. For these persons there is a licensing process. The licensing process is for individuals on the Christ Church staff that have a missional role for serving in a pastoral context.

### **Licensing**

The Leadership Council may license a person as a minister of the Gospel with responsibilities to lead in weddings, funerals, administer the sacraments, preach and teach and other duties as determined by the Sr. Staff. Those licensed for ministry serve under the supervision of an ordained pastor as assigned by Sr. Staff. Licenses are issued on a calendar year basis, *renewed* annually upon satisfactory review and approval by the Leadership Council, and contingent on continued employment at Christ Church.

### **Sr. Pastor and Associate Pastor(s)**

The Sr. Pastor and Associate Pastor(s) at Christ Church shall be ordained

ministers of the Gospel. Other staff and ministry positions can be filled with people who may or may not be either licensed or ordained.

### **Ordination and Licensing Process**

- 1. Experience:** Applicants must have 2 years' experience in ministry at Christ Church and be on staff.
- 2. Request Application:** The applicant will request the required information packet that includes education, experience and examination requirements for ordination and licensing. See Appendix III.
- 3. Mentor Process:** The applicant will complete a one-year spiritual formation discipleship process with an assigned Pastoral mentor.
- 4. Psychological Evaluation:** A psychological evaluation of the applicant is required by an approved agency.
- 5. Submit Application:** The applicant will finish the ordination/licensing application and the required theological questions.
- 6. Interview:** All applicants seeking ordination and licensing shall participate in a three-step interview process. First, there will be a "Character" interview with the Sr. Staff. The interview shall explore call to ministry, theological beliefs, and gifts for ministry both displayed and affirmed by others in the congregation. Next, there will be a "Competence" interview with the HR committee. Finally, there will be a "Chemistry" interview with those who work or will work most closely with the applicant.

Applicants must complete educational requirements, the one-year discipleship process, a psychological evaluation and theological statements prior to interviewing. Upon completion of these requirements, recommendation by the Senior Staff, HR Committee and approval by the Leadership Council, the minister shall be ordained or licensed accordingly by the Sr. Pastor of Christ Church in the presence of the congregation.

*A person's application shall be either approved or denied within thirty (30) days of the completion of all requirements. Those applicants who are approved shall receive a certificate of ordination or licensing at an ordination/licensing worship service. The title of "Reverend" is reserved for the ordained. The title of "Pastor" is for those licensed.*

# **Appendix I**

## **Ordination Requirements**

1. Have two years ministry experience at Christ Church.
2. Applicants must be on the Christ Church Staff.
3. Bachelor's Degree from accredited and approved College/University.
4. Complete Educational Requirements (Minimum Standards post Bachelor's Degree).
  - a. Completion of an approved theological degree from a seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools.
  - b. Completion of one approved continuing education event/experience annually.
5. Read and assent to Christ Church Faith and Practice as the guide and authority for ordained and licensed ministry.
6. Completion of a one-year Discipleship Process with assigned Pastoral mentor.
7. Psychological Evaluation.
8. Complete written answers of Theological Questions.
9. Be recommended by a Christ Church Ordained Pastor with endorsing signature on the Ordination Application.
10. Interview with the Sr. Staff, HR Committee, and with current team members with whom the applicant works most closely. (Look at this process).
11. The Leadership Council reserves the right to grant waivers for qualifications for justified special circumstances upon recommendation of the ordained pastors and HR Committee.

## **Appendix II**

### **Licensing Requirements**

1. Have two years ministry experience at Christ Church.
2. Applicant must be on the Christ Church staff.
3. Read and assent to Christ Church Faith and Practice as the guide and authority for ordained and licensed ministry within Christ Church.
4. Complete Educational Requirements
  - a. Completion of one approved continuing education event/experience annually.
5. Completion of a one-year Discipleship Process with assigned Pastoral mentor.
6. Psychological Evaluation.
7. Complete written answers of Theological Questions.
8. Be recommended by an ordained pastor with endorsing signature on the Licensing Application.
9. Interview with the Sr. Staff, HR Committee, and with current team members with whom the applicant works most closely.
10. The Leadership Council reserves the right to grant waivers for qualifications for justified special circumstances upon recommendation of the ordained pastors and HR Committee.

**Appendix III**  
**Christ Church Application for Ordained/  
Licensed Ministry**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Ministry Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Applying for: \_\_\_ Licensing \_\_\_ Ordination

Education:

• Institution \_\_\_\_\_

• Degree(s) Earned \_\_\_\_\_

Please Provide Transcripts of Degree Programs after High School

Years of Experience in Ministry and Place(s) of Service:

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\_\_\_\_\_

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***The following responses are to be typed in Double Spaced, 12pt. font, Times New Roman.***

**Please describe your call to ministry. Include your understanding of your gifts for ministry. (Ordination requirement: 25 pages. License requirement: 1-3 page(s).)**

**Answer the following questions on separate paper and attach to this application. (Ordination requirement: 710 pages. License requirement: 3-5 pages)**

**1. Theology:**

- What is the nature and character of the Trinity?
- What is the nature of Christ? Why is it important that Jesus Christ is both fully human and fully divine?

- What is the nature of the Holy Spirit?
  - What is sin?
  - What is God's grace? What is the relationship between God's forgiveness and God's grace?
  - How does God offer salvation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ? How do you receive that gift of salvation?
  - What does it mean that we are saved by faith alone?
  - What is the relationship between faith and works?
  - What is your understanding of the authority of Scripture?
  - How has God revealed these truths to you throughout your own life?
1. Ecclesiology:
- What is the purpose of the church?
  - What is your understanding of the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion?
  - What is your understanding of the covenant of marriage and the importance of funerals?
  - How do you understand your pastoral role and authority in the church?
  - What are essential values of ministry of Christ Church and how do you intend to uphold them?
2. Personal Holiness:
- What are your understandings of the spiritual disciplines? Which have been most critical to you in your own personal formation?
  - Gospel identity is central to pastoral ministry. How do you understand your identity in Christ?

**To the best of my knowledge, all of the statements of belief and personal information that I have provided are accurate, true, and representative of my belief and practice. I have read and fully assent to Christ Church Faith and Practice as the guide and authority for Ordained and Licensed Ministry within Christ Church.**

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Signature of Applicant

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Date

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Signature of Ordained Pastor