



**MY ORDINATION AS**

**ELDER**

**OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH**

## **SERVICE FOR THE ORDINATION AS ELDER**

*[The secretary shall present the candidates to the bishop, saying: “Bishop \_\_\_\_\_, I present to you \_\_\_\_\_ (reading their names aloud) to be ordained as elders in the Free Methodist Church.” Then the bishop shall say to the people:]*

Dear friends in Christ: All persons who belong to Jesus Christ are called to minister His reconciling work through the Church. But to lead the Church, our Lord calls particular believers to shepherd the people, teach doctrine, administer the sacraments and keep order. Each person who stands before you testifies to such an inward call of the Holy Spirit to the work of an ordained elder.

God calls men and women, but the Church examines them so as to confirm the presence of maturity, good character and the necessary spiritual gifts and personal graces. These persons who stand before you have been so examined and affirmed by conference leaders for ordination.

When people are set apart for this leadership responsibility, they are ordained by the laying on of hands. Paul remembered this moment in his counsel to Timothy when he said: “I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands.”

Whether ordained ministers serve as pastors, teachers, missionaries, chaplains or in unique combinations of these vocations, they need to provide Spirit-filled leadership. As they lead the Church to fulfill the Great Commandment to love the Lord our God and others; and to fulfill the Great Commission to make disciples of all peoples, ordained elders are God’s gift to the Church.

The leadership of ordained ministers focuses on developing healthy, biblical communities of holy people. These communities multiply disciples, mentor leaders, create

new groups and plant new churches. Such Spirit-filled leadership requires vision and courage to move people to obey the Word of God, to walk in step with the Spirit of God and, with joy, to see His church increase.

Rooted in a deep love for Christ and sharing His compassion for people, ordained ministers help to create congregations that are fervent in prayer, enthusiastic in worship, holy in lifestyle, insistent for justice, caring for the poor, and reaching out locally and globally to invite all people into a life-long relationship with Jesus Christ.

### **The Collect**

*Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts, who by your divine providence appointed various orders in your church: Give your grace, we humbly pray, to these who come now to their ordination. Replenish them with the truth of your doctrine and endue them with holiness of life as they keep watch over themselves and all the flock that they oversee. Help them to faithfully serve before you to the glory of your great name and to the benefit of your holy church, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and ever. Amen.*

### **The Old Testament - Isaiah 6:1-8**

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above Him stood the seraphim; each had six wings; with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of His glory.”

And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. And I said: “Woe is me. For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean

lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!”

Then flew one of the seraphim to me, having in his hand a burning coal which he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth, and said, “Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin forgiven.” And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.”

### **The Epistle – I Timothy 4:11-16**

<sup>11</sup> Command and teach these things. <sup>12</sup> Don’t let anyone look down on you . . . , but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. <sup>13</sup> Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. <sup>14</sup> Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

<sup>15</sup> Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. <sup>16</sup> Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

### **The Gospel – John 10:11-18**

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep.

I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down

of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. I have received this command from my Father.

Dear Friends in Christ, [*Here the candidates may be called by name. And the bishop shall say to them as follows:*]

Each of you has heard in the readings from the Scriptures what dignity and importance belong to this office to which you are called. We have confidence that you have considered these things long before this time and that you have clearly determined, by God's grace, to give yourself completely to the fulfilment of your call. It is our hope that with all your strength you will apply yourself wholly to this one thing and direct all your concerns and studies in this direction. May you continually pray to God the Father, by the mediation of our only Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the help of the Holy Spirit, that by daily reading and weighing of the Scriptures, you may grow stronger and more mature in your ministry. May you endeavour through the sanctifying power of Christ to be a wholesome and godly example for others to follow.

And now, so that this congregation of Christ may also understand your mind and will in these things, and that your promises may move you all the more to fulfil your calling, answer plainly these questions, which we ask in the Name of God and His Church.

## **Questions**

1. Do you confidently believe that the Lord has called you to serve His church as an ordained Elder?

**Answer: I so believe**

- 2.. Will you be careful to nourish your soul through the disciplined use of the means of grace and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, continually rekindle the gift of God that is in you?

**Answer: I will**

3. Are you persuaded that the Holy Scriptures contain all doctrine necessary for salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, and are the unique and authoritative standard for the church's faith and life?

**Answer: I am.**

4. Will you then, in fulfilling your ministry, faithfully study, teach and apply the truth of these Scriptures publicly and privately? Will you teach nothing as necessary to salvation except what can be concluded from and proved by the Scriptures and, when necessary, graciously correct error?

**Answer: I will do so by the help of the Lord.**

5. Will you commit to living a holy life according to the teachings and behaviour of Christ so as to be a wholesome example of godliness? (And will you do your best to influence your husband/wife/ family to join you in this commitment?)

**Answer: I will do so by the help of the Lord.**

6. Will you, in the exercise of your ministry, lead people to faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and as Lord, disciple them to grow in grace, and lead them to participate together in God's mission to bring wholeness to the church, neighborhood, community and world?

**Answer: I will do so by the help of the Lord.**

7. Will you practice and encourage, so far as you are able, waiting upon the Lord, seeking peace, and expressing love among all Christian people and especially among those who are committed to your care?

**Answer: I will do so, the Lord being my helper.**

8. As an ordained elder in the Free Methodist Church, in keeping with the Holy Scriptures, will you respect and be guided by those in authority over you?

**Answer: I will do so by the help of the Lord.**

*[The candidates shall kneel, the ordained elders shall be called forward for the laying on of hands, and the bishop shall say:]*

Let us pray.

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, of your infinite love and goodness you have given us Your one and only beloved son, Jesus Christ, our redeemer and the author of everlasting life. To you we offer our heartfelt thanks. We praise and worship you, and we humbly pray that we may continue always to be thankful for these and all other blessings that come from you. May we mature daily and go forward in the knowledge and faith of Him who died for us, who rose from death and even now lives to make intercession for us. May your holy name be forever glorified and your blessed kingdom enlarged, through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

*[The bishop and the ordained ministers present shall lay their hands upon the head of each of them, and the bishop, addressing each by name shall say:]*

The Lord pour upon you the Holy Spirit for the office and work of an Elder in the Free Methodist Church now committed unto you by the laying on of our hands. Amen.

*[They shall continue to kneel, and the bishop shall deliver the Bible to each one of them in succession and shall say:]*

**By the power of the Holy Spirit, take authority** to serve as an ordained Elder in Christ's church. **Faithfully proclaim God's Word, declare God's forgiveness, celebrate the sacraments,** shepherd God's people.

### **Prayer of Blessing**

Most merciful Father, we ask you to send your heavenly blessings upon these your servants that they may be clothed with righteousness and that your Word spoken by their mouths

may bear fruit. Give us the grace to hear your voice as they speak to us from your most Holy Word. May we, in all our words and deeds, seek your glory and the growth of your kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord. By your Holy Spirit assist us in all that we do with your most gracious favour. Continue to help us, so that in all our works begun, sustained, and ended in you, we may glorify your name and finally, by your mercy, obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*[They shall stand and face congregation]*

*[The bishop shall say:]*

As representatives of all God's people, let us acknowledge our duty to support \_\_\_\_\_ with our prayers and encouragement, thereby helping them to keep the promises they have made, and to grow and develop as ministers of the gospel. The congregation will affirm this by standing.

*[Presentation of credentials and congratulations]*

## **Benediction**

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessings of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.