

Steps Toward Ordination

(Not always in this exact order or way)

1. Person senses God's call to vocational ministry,
2. Receives theological/ministry training,
3. Experiments in various ministry settings,
4. Reflects on ministry experiences and draws conclusions about God's will for life and service.
5. Church recognizes and affirms the individual's capabilities and divine possibilities.
6. (Possibly at the person's request or a pastor's recommendation) Church votes to explore potential ordination—possibly appoints its own Ordination Examination Council and/or seeks assistance from another body, such as the NorthStar Church Network .
7. Candidate meets with the OEC (and/or a similar Council provided by NCN) and answers questions and share perspectives on a variety of topics: conversion, character, commitments, calling, convictions of faith, philosophy of ministry, reasons for ordination, strengths/challenges, practical issues, etc.).
8. The Council makes a recommendation to the Church, either to proceed with ordination, or to wait until the candidate has additional education, experience, and understanding.
9. Church votes on whether to ordain the individual.
10. If affirmative, the church sets a date and prepares an ordination service, which may include:
 - Worship—songs, scripture, prayers, readings (often chosen by the candidate)
 - Brief description of the ordination process
 - Recognition of ordination participants—individuals, churches, associations, etc.
 - Candidate's testimony of calling
 - Charge to the candidate
 - Charge to the congregation
 - Affirmations by the candidate and congregation
 - Ordination Sermon
 - Laying of hands and prayer by congregation
 - Ordination prayer
 - Presentation of a Bible
 - Presentation of an Ordination Certificate
 - Reception following the service

In some cases, the ordination service may also be an installation service, if the church has also called the candidate as its pastor. In this case, the candidate is not only ordained to the Gospel ministry, but also installed as the church's new pastor. (Or the church may choose to have a separate installation service, sometime after the ordination service.)