

ORDINATION POLICY & PROCEDURE

POLICY STATEMENT

Faith Mission Christian Church has ordaining authority to ordain pastors (spiritual leaders) and deacons (servant leaders). Deacons are appointed by the Pastor and ordained after a course of training and acceptance of their duties. Pastors are ordained through a specific set of procedures outlined in this Policy.

Ordination as a spiritual leader (i.e. pastor/pastoral leader) is neither a right nor an entitlement to be claimed by an individual. A church prayerfully ordains, not to endow with power nor to confer social status, but as a public affirmation of what God has already done. A church chooses to ordain a person because they have discerned evidence of a Godly call, have witnessed gifts of ministry, have seen satisfactory preparation for ministry, and accept the candidate to minister among them.

Faith Mission Christian Church affirms that ordination requires the candidate for ordination is serving exclusively at Faith Mission Christian Church. Because ordination is the process that a church enters to affirm the calling, giftedness, and service of the candidate, ordination cannot be detached from a place of service. This service is observed during the Licensure period of the candidate for ordination.

Licensure is a pre-requisite for ordination to spiritual leadership. Faith Mission Christian Church may license individuals for the express purpose of future vocational ministry of the Word while pastoring, church planting, vocational evangelism, or missionary assignment. Licensure is not necessary for purpose of facilitation of the church's own ministries (e.g., women/men's ministry, home visitation, group evangelism, etc.). Likewise, there are circumstances in which a "commission" rather than an ordination or license may be appropriate (e.g., a short-term mission trip).

The most important prerequisite for ordination, the call of God to ministry, does not readily yield itself to particular standards that a denomination or local congregation might establish. This is why the call must be tested by other prerequisites or standards, especially those having to do with education standards, evidence of gifts and character for ministry, and the candidate's own clarity about the proposed type of service in which the candidate intends to serve as a licensed or ordained minister.

PROCEDURE

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Role of the Church Congregation

- The church will establish a committee expressly for the licensure and ordination proceedings to be established and conducted.
- The established committee will meet with the candidate to gain information as to eligibility for ordination.
- The established committee will supply to the existing pastors of the church all the information at its disposal.
- The committee and the existing pastors will follow its own procedures for examination of the candidate and making a recommendation to the church.
- If the church agrees, a date for ordination and order of service can then be set by the candidate and the church.

Role of the Candidate

The candidate should seek counseling from his/her pastor as to their perceived call to vocational ministry and as to procedures leading to ordination.

The candidate shall be responsible for:

- Submitting documents as required by the established committee.
- Providing written and verbal articulation of their call to vocational ministry before the church
- Providing an official transcript from all schools attended that documents successful completion of acceptable coursework (and graduation, if appropriate).
- Providing written references as required by the established committee.
- Agreement to the Statement of Faith
- Completed doctrinal questionnaire
- Documented philosophy of ministry
- Agreement to tenure of Licensure that precedes ordination
- While licensed, acceptable completion of consistent service at Faith Mission Christian Church
- While licensed, preparation and successful defense of doctrine before an established ordination council of several pastors

The candidate should inform the appropriate church committee and leaders concerning his/her readiness to proceed with the ordination process.

The candidate may select a sponsor. The role of the sponsor is to be advocate for the candidate as they share their theological stance and concept of ministry in meetings before COMSAO and examination councils.

Abbreviated Steps to Ordination

1. Church committee and candidate meet to review procedures and establish a course of action. *Application materials will not be sent to candidates without the authorization of the lead pastor.* The work of the committee includes:
 - a. Assuring that all the documentation is in order.
 - b. Questioning about ethical boundary issues and fitness for ministry.
 - c. Ascertaining the congeniality of the person for ministry in the church.
 - d. Reviewing the submitted papers with the primary intent of helping prepare the candidate for the examination council.
 - e. Establishing personal and professional relationships with the candidate.
2. Reviewed application materials, if approved by the committee, are submitted to the lead pastor.
3. The candidate and lead pastor meet before the lead pastor responds to the committee with agreement.
4. If all agree, the lead pastor announces the candidacy to the church for an invitation to proceed
5. If the church agrees, the lead pastor schedules the trial sermon of the candidate
6. If the church, the committee, and the lead pastor find the candidate ready, the candidate is issued a License for Church Ministry by Faith Mission Christian Church.
7. While licensed, the candidate serves consistently at Faith Mission for a period of no less than one year.
8. While licensed, the candidate prepares for the ordination council's examination.
9. No sooner than one year from licensure, the candidate who has successfully and consistently served will be scheduled to appear before the ordination council for their doctrinal examination.
10. The examination council announces its findings and recommendation from the examination.
11. The church ordination council plans the ordination service and announces the plans to the church.
12. At the ordination service, the new minister will receive their ordination certificate.