



Suggested Guide for the Ordination of Pastors

Ordination is widely recognized among Baptist churches as a vital function of the local congregation. While the local church retains sole authority to ordain, the process serves a broader purpose by providing ministerial credentials recognized by other churches and ministries.

As the number of Converge Rocky Mountain churches continues to grow, this guide offers a helpful and unified process for evaluating pastoral candidates and conducting ordination in a way that promotes good order, doctrinal fidelity, and effective ministry. These recommendations are not binding but are strongly encouraged for the sake of integrity and consistency.

I. Ordination Standards

Spiritual Maturity - The candidate must demonstrate a clear experience of conversion, a divine call to ministry, a consistent Christian walk, and a passion for reaching the lost and strengthening the Church both locally and globally.

Doctrinal Alignment - The candidate must affirm, without reservation, the Affirmation of Faith adopted by Converge Worldwide.

Ministerial Training - Candidates are expected to show competence in ministry through formal theological training and/or substantial ministry experience. Their written documents and pastoral work should reflect sound preparation.

Denominational Understanding - Candidates must affirm historic Baptist distinctives regarding church order and practice. Those from non-Baptist or non-Converge backgrounds are expected to familiarize themselves with Baptist polity. A candidate who cannot affirm the Converge Affirmation of Faith should not seek ordination in a Converge Rocky Mountain church.

Practical Experience - Candidates should demonstrate experience in preaching and pastoral care. Exceptions may be made in special cases such as missionary service or chaplaincy requirements.

Note: A lack of clarity in calling, doctrinal confusion, or serious character concerns should disqualify a candidate, regardless of education or intent.

II. Ordination Procedure

1. **Preliminary Evaluation** - The local church evaluates the candidate in light of 1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9.
2. **Regional Contact** - If the church affirms the candidate's readiness, the Elders contacts the Converge Rocky Mountain Regional President to begin the ordination process. A pre-ordination coaching team will be assigned to review all submitted materials.
3. **Required Documents**
 - A 2–3 page overview of the candidate's conversion and call to ministry.
 - A 10–12 page Statement of Faith following CRM guidelines.
 - A 2–3 page Statement of Pastoral Leadership (CRM provides an outline).
 - A signed Affirmation of the Converge Worldwide Statement of Faith.
 - A signed Code of Ministerial Ethics.
4. **Promoting the Ordination Council** - After pre-ordination review, the church will set a date and distribute invitations to regional pastors and churches. Send digital copies of the candidate's key documents with the invitation. Be sure to give at least 30 days' notice.
5. **The Ordination Council** - Composed of ordained clergy and representatives from the candidate's church. Reviews the candidate's conversion, call, theology, and leadership. Votes to recommend or not recommend ordination. The final decision rests with the local church Elder board. If not recommended, the council may suggest a course of study and re-interview at a later time.
6. **Public Ordination Service** - This service should occur only after council approval. The service may include:
 - Scripture reading, prayer, special music
 - Reading of the Ordination Council's recommendation
 - Ordination sermon, charge to the candidate, charge to the church, and benediction.

III. Recognition of Previous Ordination

1. For ministers ordained in other like-minded fellowships, a church may request an interview with the Ordination Council and, if approved, hold a public recognition service.
2. Ministers from traditions significantly different from Converge should complete the full ordination process outlined in this guide.

IV. Ordination Paperwork

Candidates must submit the following documents before meeting with the Pre-Ordination Coaching Team:

- 1. Call to Ministry** - A 2–3 page narrative including:
 - Childhood and formative experiences
 - Conversion and Call to ministry
 - Education and key ministry experiences
 - Influential people and events

- 2. Statement of Faith** - A thorough 8–12 page doctrinal summary including:
 - Scripture
 - God and the Trinity
 - Humanity, sin, and salvation
 - Angels and Satan
 - The Church
 - Eschatology
 - Contemporary issues (e.g., sexuality, technology, cultural trends)

Format Requirements:

- Clear structure with headings and subheadings
- Limited direct quotations of Scripture (1 per point on average)
- Logical progression and theological clarity
- Tone appropriate for both pastors and laypeople

- 3. Statement of Pastoral Leadership** - 3–5 pages addressing:

a. Theology of Ministry

- The church's distinct mission
- Role of the Holy Spirit
- Congregational leadership
- Ministry purpose

b. Leadership Style

- Personal leadership approach
- Use of gifts in discipleship
- Conflict resolution and crisis management
- Preferred ministry settings

c. Personal and Professional Goals

- Spiritual and personal development
- Growth areas
- Future training and ministry development
- Relationship with colleagues

d. Contemporary Issues

- Be prepared for verbal discussion of current topics with the council

4. Signed Affirmation Documents (see below)

- a. Converge Code of Ministerial Ethics
- b. Converge Worldwide Affirmation of Faith and CRM Doctrinal Distinctives

V. Code of Ministerial Ethics

This code outlines the standards for personal integrity, pastoral responsibility, and denominational cooperation, reflecting the high calling of gospel ministry.

My Person

- I will endeavor to pray daily; to read, study, and meditate upon God's Word; and to maintain extended times of contemplation.
- I will plan time to be with my family, realizing my special relationship to them, and their position as important members of my congregation.
- I will seek to keep my body physically fit through proper eating habits and planned exercise, renewing myself through weekly time off and vacations.
- I will try to keep myself emotionally fit, keeping in touch with my feelings and growing in healthy control of them.
- I will strive to grow through comprehensive reading and participation in professional educational opportunities.
- I will be a servant of God seeking to maintain a life of purity, integrity, and truthfulness. I will avoid lust, pornography, and sexual sin. I will not abuse my own body and will avoid addictions of all kinds.
- I will not emotionally, verbally, physically, or sexually abuse my spouse, my children or any other person.
- I will seek professional help promptly when I need personal support or intervention.
- I will seek to develop accountable relationships with one or more of my peers of the same gender.

My Calling

- I will seek to conduct myself consistently with my calling and commitment as a servant of God.
- I will give priority to my congregation and will accept added responsibilities only if they do not interfere with the overall effectiveness of my ministry in the congregation.
- I will consider a confidential statement made to me as a sacred trust.
- I will responsibly exercise the freedom of the pulpit, speaking the truth of God's Word with conviction in love; and will acknowledge any extensive use of material prepared by someone else.

My Finances

- I will advocate adequate compensation for my profession and will assist the congregation in understanding that a minister should not expect or require fees for pastoral services.
- I will be honest in my stewardship of money, paying bills promptly, and asking for no personal favors or discounts based on my professional status.
- I will give tithes and/or offerings as a good steward.

My Congregation

- I will seek to regard all persons in the congregation with equal love and concern, and undertake to minister impartially to their needs and refrain from behavior that will be divisive.
- I will treat all those in the church with dignity and respect, while retaining the right to establish close friendships within the congregation.
- I will exercise confidence in the lay leadership, assisting in their training and mobilizing their creativity.
- I will seek to lead the church in a positive direction. I will remain open to constructive criticism and to suggestions intended to strengthen our common ministry.
- I will candidate at only one church at a time. I will respond promptly and definitely to a call, and I shall seek to deal fairly with the church I am presently serving.

My Colleagues

- I will seek to maintain supportive, caring and accountable relationships with my colleagues in the ministry. I will seek and honor all commitments made with other pastors, and I will respect the pastoral relationships that my neighboring pastors have with their parishioners.
- I will, upon my departure, sever my pastoral relations with the congregation, recognizing that all pastoral functions should henceforth rightfully be conducted by my successor. I will not agree to perform any pastoral services in a church I have previously served until I have first obtained permission from the current pastor.
- I will, upon retirement or withdrawal from the ministry, refrain from engaging in pastoral functions within our church fellowship unless requested by the pastor.

My Denomination

- I will cooperate with the personnel of Converge Worldwide (BGC) and of the district in which I serve and offer responsible criticism so that our common

service in the kingdom of God might be more effective. If I seriously violate the vows I have made to God and my church, I will submit to the restoration/reconciliation process established by my denomination and my church.

- I will use my influence to affirm and edify the fellowship of this church with the district and Converge Worldwide (BGC).

I affirm my commitment to abide by the Affirmation of Ministerial Ethics.

Signed _____ Date _____

VI. Affirmation of Faith

This doctrinal statement reflects the beliefs adopted by Converge Worldwide and affirmed by Converge Rocky Mountain churches. Candidates must affirm these beliefs as part of the ordination process.

1. The Word of God

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

2. The Trinity

We believe that there is one living and true God, eternally existing in three persons, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious roles in the work of creation, providence, and redemption.

3. God the Father

We believe in God the Father, an infinite personal Spirit, perfect in holiness, wisdom, power, and love. He mercifully concerns Himself with each person, hears and answers prayer, and saves from sin and death all who come to Him through Jesus Christ.

4. Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life, performed miracles, died as a substitutionary atonement, rose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will return personally and visibly.

5. The Holy Spirit

We believe the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment, and to regenerate, sanctify, and empower believers. He indwells, teaches, and guides every believer.

6. Regeneration

We believe all people are sinners by nature and by choice, under condemnation. Those who repent and trust in Jesus Christ are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

7. The Church

We believe in the universal Church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and all regenerated persons are members. We believe in the local church as a

gathered community of baptized believers, associated for worship, work, and fellowship.

8. Christian Conduct

We believe that Christians should live for the glory of God and the good of others; that their lives should reflect holiness and stewardship, and that they should pursue maturity in Christ.

9. The Ordinances

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ instituted two ordinances for the church: baptism and the Lord's Supper. These are to be observed until He returns.

10. Religious Liberty

We believe in the direct relationship between individuals and God. Each church is self-governing and free from external control. Church and State should remain separate, each fulfilling its duties without interference.

11. Church Cooperation

We believe local churches can best advance the cause of Christ through voluntary cooperation with regional and national organizations, as well as with other Christian fellowships.

12. The Last Things

We believe in the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ to earth, the resurrection of the body, the final judgment, the eternal joy of the redeemed, and the endless suffering of the lost.

VII. Doctrinal Distinctives

These doctrinal distinctives further express our biblical convictions on key cultural and theological matters.

Humanity

We believe that human beings are the crowning work of creation, each immutably and biologically created as male or female, together reflecting the image of God. Though originally created innocent, all humans have sinned and are in need of salvation. Christ's death affirms the sacredness and redeemability of every human life.

Marriage

We believe that marriage is a sacred institution designed by God for the well-being of humanity and the continuation of the human race. It is the spiritual and physical union of one man and one woman, rooted in Scripture and upheld throughout biblical revelation.

I affirm my commitment to the Affirmation of Faith and Doctrinal Distinctives.

Signed _____ Date _____