



Diploma of Vocation

IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER AND OF THE + SON AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

To _____

of _____

Having called on the Lord, our God, for guidance and in the exercise of the authority with which He has vested His church on earth, we, the members of

Messiah Lutheran Church

of **2727 Five Mile Road NE Grand Rapids MI 49525**

have elected you to the office of **Pastor**

and herewith extend to you this formal notification of your solemn call.

In the name of the Triune God and by His authority we ask you to assume the responsibilities of the office to which we have called you and faithfully to perform all the duties of your office according to the Word of God and the confessional standards of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as drawn from the Sacred Scriptures and found in the Book of Concord. We ask you to do this according to the needs as specified in the accompanying document or as may be resolved and mutually agreed upon from time to time. To the end that you may be enabled to do this, we pledge you our wholehearted and continuing cooperation and support in word and deed and in our prayers to God in your behalf.

We pray God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has moved us to extend our call to you, to convince you by His Holy Spirit that it comes from Him; to induce you to accept it; to conduct you safely to your field of labor; and to bless your ministrations to the glory of His holy name, the building of His church, the temporal and eternal welfare of many people, and your own great joy and blessing.

Signature - Congregational Representative

Signature - Pastor

(Signatures to be affixed during the public ceremony of installation)

Supplement to the Diploma of Vocation

In the name of the Triune God and by His authority, in order that we might carry out His mission to the world, we hereby authorize and obligate you:

1. To administer to us the Word of God in its full truth and purity as contained in the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and as set forth in the confessional writings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as found in the Book of Concord;
2. To administer the holy sacraments in accordance with their divine institution;
3. To demonstrate the mind and spirit of Christ as you serve the members of the congregation and equip them for Christ's mission to seek and save the lost;
4. To equip and enable the members of the congregation to serve one another and those outside the fellowship of the congregation;
5. To perform the functions of a pastor in an evangelical manner; to aid, counsel, and guide members of all ages and social conditions; to visit the sick and the dying; to admonish the indifferent and the erring; to support the members of the congregation as they extend that evangelical ministry to others;
6. To guard and promote faithfully the spiritual welfare of the members of this congregation, in particular to see to the instruction of the catechumens, both children and adults, in the Word and thus prepare them for communicant membership in the church;
7. To guide the congregation in applying the divinely ordained discipline of the church according to the Word of God and to assist and lead the members of the congregation in practicing the forgiven life with one another;
8. To promote and guide the mission activity of the congregation as it is related to the local community and to endeavors of the Synod and its Districts, in particular to train workers and guide them in evangelism and to enlist the support of the congregation for mission work;
9. To serve as a resource and guide for members of the congregation as they participate in the ministry of Christian education, and to train parents to teach the Christian faith to their children;
10. To assist the congregation in adopting administrative policies and procedures that will help it carry out the mission of a Christian congregation;
11. To serve the congregation as an example of Christian conduct; to endeavor earnestly to live in Christian unity with the members of the congregation, fellow workers, and sister congregations in the Synod; and by the grace of God to do everything possible for the edification of the congregation and the upbuilding of the church in Christ.

As the baptized people of God we partner with you to accomplish His mission to the world, and we hereby obligate ourselves:

- A. To receive you as a servant of Jesus Christ, to give you the honor and love and obedience that the Word prescribes, to aid you by word and deed, and to support you with our diligent, faithful assistance and prayers;
- B. To make faithful and regular use of the means of grace;
- C. To work with you to equip God's people to glorify Him and extend His kingdom by living out our baptism;
- D. To make appropriate arrangements for your continuing education as a professional person in the ministry of the Gospel;
- E. To provide for your proper maintenance according to our ability and to review your salary, housing arrangements, and all allowances periodically, beginning with the following arrangements.

Ordination

The candidate is presented before the altar. The presiding minister, standing before the altar, says:

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Address

P Beloved in the Lord, [full name of candidate] has been called by the Lord of the Church into the Office of the Holy Ministry of the Word and Sacraments. He has been prepared for this ministry by careful study and prayer. He has been examined and declared ready and prepared to undertake this sacred responsibility, and, by the guidance of God the Holy Spirit, he has in the Church's usual order been called to be [type of ministry] of/at [name and place]. According to apostolic practice, he is now presented to be ordained and consecrated to this office established by God.

Please stand as able

The candidate kneels. The presiding minister sings or speaks the following. It may also be sung by a cantor or choir. The alleluias are sung only after verse two.

Canticle

A Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your | faithful people*
 And kindle in them the | fire of Your love.
 Through the diversity of tongues You gathered together | the nations*
 In the unity | of the faith.
 Alleluia.

The hymn "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest" (Hymn 498 or 499) is sung. The attending ministers may sing the first stanza, followed by the congregation singing the remaining stanzas.

498 Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest



1 Come, Ho - ly Ghost, Cre - a - tor blest, And make
 2 To You, the Coun - sel - or, we cry, To You,
 3 In You, with grac - es sev - en - fold, We God's
 4 Your light to ev - 'ry thought im - part, And shed



our hearts Your place of rest; Come with Your grace and
 the gift of God Most High; The fount of life, the
 al - might - y hand be - hold While You with tongues of
 Your love in ev - 'ry heart; The weak - ness of our



heav'n-ly aid, And fill the hearts which You have made.
 fire of love, The soul's a - noint - ing from a - bove.
 fire pro - claim To all the world His ho - ly name.
 mor - tal state With death - less might in - vig - or - ate.

- 5 Drive far away our wily foe,
 And Your abiding peace bestow;
 With You as our protecting guide,
 No evil can with us abide.
- 6 Teach us to know the Father, Son,
 And You, from both, as Three in One
 That we Your name may ever bless
 And in our lives the truth confess.
- △ 7 Praise we the Father and the Son
 And Holy Spirit, with them One,
 And may the Son on us bestow
 The gifts that from the Spirit flow!

Text and tune: Public domain

Salutation and Collect

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

O Lord God, heavenly Father, by the blessed light of Your holy Word You have led us to the knowledge of Your Son. We humbly implore You to replenish us with the grace of Your Holy Spirit that we may ever walk in the light of Your truth and, rejoicing with sure confidence in Christ, our Savior, be brought to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your

Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

The candidate stands and remains at the altar with the presiding minister. The assisting ministers may join them at the altar.

The presiding minister turns to the candidate and says:

P Hear what Holy Scripture says concerning the institution of the Office of the Holy Ministry.

Assisting ministers read one or more selections of Holy Scripture from each of the following sections. They may conclude the reading by citing the biblical reference.

The Institution of the Office of the Holy Ministry

Matthew 28:18–20 NKJV

A Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

John 20:21–23 NKJV alt.

A Jesus said to them again, “Peace be to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

The Responsibilities of the Office of the Holy Ministry

P Hear what Holy Scripture says concerning the responsibilities of the Office of the Holy Ministry.

John 21:15–17

John 21:15–17

A ¹⁵When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Feed my lambs.” ¹⁶He said to him a second time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” He said to him, “Tend my sheep.” ¹⁷He said to him the third time, “Simon, son of John, do you love me?” Peter was grieved because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” and he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep.

Luke 24:46–47 alt.

A [Jesus] said to them, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”

1 Corinthians 11:23–25*1 Corinthians 11:23–25*

A ²³For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” ²⁵In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

1 Timothy 4:14–16*1 Timothy 4:14–16*

A ¹⁴Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵Practice these things, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. ¹⁶Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

1 Corinthians 4:1–2*1 Corinthians 4:1–2*

A ¹This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ²Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.

2 Corinthians 3:4–5*2 Corinthians 3:4–5*

A ⁴Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. ⁵Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God,

2 Corinthians 5:17–21*2 Corinthians 5:17–21*

A ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. ¹⁸All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; ¹⁹that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. ²¹For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

2 Timothy 4:1–5*2 Timothy 4:1–5*

A ¹I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ²preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. ⁵As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

1 Timothy 3:1–7*1 Timothy 3:1–7*

A ¹The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task. ²Therefore an overseer must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. ⁴He must manage his own household well, with all dignity keeping his children submissive, ⁵for if someone does not know how to manage his own household, how will he care for God’s church? ⁶He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Ephesians 4:11–12 NKJV

A [Our Lord] gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Acts 20:28 NKJV

A Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

1 Peter 5:2–4*1 Peter 5:2–4*

A ²shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; ³not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock. ⁴And when the chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.

The Strength and Promise in the Office of the Holy Ministry

P Hear what Holy Scripture says concerning the strength and promise God gives to those in the Office of the Holy Ministry.

Matthew 5:13–16*Matthew 5:13–16*

A ¹³“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house.

¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

2 Corinthians 10:17–18*2 Corinthians 10:17–18*

A ¹⁷“Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.” ¹⁸For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends.

2 Timothy 3:14–17 NKJV

A Continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

The presiding minister addresses the candidate:

P Dear brother in Christ, the Lord grant that you receive and keep these words in your heart so that you may be strengthened and encouraged in your labors. God gathers His Church by and around His Holy Gospel and thereby also grants it growth and increase according to His good pleasure. That this may be done, He has established the Office of the Holy Ministry into which you have been called by the Church and are now to be ordained and consecrated by prayer and the laying on of hands.

In the presence of this congregation and before our Lord God to whom you must give an

account now and at the Last Day, I now ask you:

Do you acknowledge that the Lord has called you through His Church into the ministry of Word and Sacrament?

R *I do.*

P Do you believe and confess the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments to be the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

R *Yes, I believe and confess the canonical Scriptures to be the inspired Word of God and the only infallible rule of faith and practice.*

P Do you believe and confess the three Ecumenical Creeds, namely the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds, as faithful testimonies to the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and do you reject all the errors which they condemn?

R *Yes, I believe and confess the three Ecumenical Creeds because they are in accord with the Word of God. I also reject all the errors they condemn.*

P Do you confess the Unaltered Augsburg Confession to be a true exposition of Holy Scripture and a correct exhibition of the doctrine of the Evangelical Lutheran Church? And do you confess that the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, the Small and Large Catechisms of Martin Luther, the Smalcald Articles, the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, and the Formula of Concord—as these are contained in the Book of Concord—are also in agreement with this one scriptural faith?

R *Yes, I make these Confessions my own because they are in accord with the Word of God.*

P Do you promise that you will perform the duties of your office in accordance with these Confessions, and that all your preaching and teaching and your administration of the Sacraments will be in conformity with Holy Scripture and with these Confessions?

R *Yes, I promise, with the help of God.*

P Will you faithfully instruct both young and old in the chief articles of Christian doctrine, will you forgive the sins of those who repent, and will you promise never to divulge the sins confessed to you? Will you minister faithfully to the sick and dying, and will you demonstrate to the Church a constant and ready ministry centered in the Gospel? Will you admonish and encourage the people to a lively confidence in Christ and in holy living?

R *Yes, I will, with the help of God.*

P Finally, will you honor and adorn the Office of the Holy Ministry with a holy life? Will you be diligent in the study of Holy Scripture and the Confessions? And will you be constant in prayer for those under your pastoral care?

R *I will, the Lord helping me through the power and grace of His Holy Spirit.*

The candidate kneels. The presiding minister lays both his hands directly on the head of the candidate.

The Laying on of Hands

P [Jesus said:] “Peace be to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.” And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

P *[Full name of candidate]*, I ordain and consecrate you to the Office of the Holy Ministry of the Word and Sacraments in the one, holy, catholic *[or Christian]*, and apostolic Church, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P The Lord Jesus pour out on you His Holy Spirit for this office and work that you may faithfully preach the Gospel and administer the Sacraments. Amen.

The assisting pastors each in turn lay both their hands directly on the newly ordained, adding an appropriate blessing or passage from the Word of God.

The assisting pastors, together with the presiding minister, may jointly lay hands on the newly ordained while the congregation prays the Lord's Prayer.

Lord's Prayer

C Our Father who art in heaven,
 hallowed be Thy name,
 Thy kingdom come,
 Thy will be done on earth
 as it is in heaven;
 give us this day our daily bread;
 and forgive us our trespasses
 as we forgive those
 who trespass against us;
 and lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil.
 For Thine is the kingdom
 and the power and the glory
 forever and ever. Amen.

The newly ordained stands and is vested with a stole. He may also be vested with a chasuble.

The presiding minister and the newly ordained turn to face the congregation. The presiding minister says:

Presentation of the Newly Ordained

P Beloved in the Lord, Holy Scripture says, "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you."

Will you, the faithful, according to the Church's public confession, and speaking for the whole Church, receive *[name]* as a servant of Christ and minister of Word and Sacrament?
 If so, then answer: We will.

C We will.

Please stand as able

The assisting ministers and the newly ordained may kneel. The presiding minister prays:

Collect

P Let us pray.

O eternal, merciful God, You have spoken through Your own dear Son, saying that the harvest is plentiful but the laborers few and that we should ask You, the Lord of the harvest, to send laborers into Your harvest. Hear now our prayer on behalf of [name], who this day is ordained and consecrated to be Your minister in the Church. Strengthen him mightily to take up the Word of truth and faithfully to administer Your holy Sacraments.

O Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, You gave Your own life to be a holy and perfect sacrifice for us and for our salvation. Grant [name] a heart zealous for Your people and boldness to guide, comfort, admonish, and serve Your congregation with gentleness and wisdom. Fill him, Your undershepherd, with Your love that in Your name he will seek the straying and bear up the weak. Give him the heart never to grow weary in the service of Your flock.

O Holy Spirit, strengthen and keep [name] in the Word of truth and life, and support him in every time of trouble and distress. Make his labors fruitful and, when the day of labor is ended, grant him to come with rejoicing before Your presence to receive with all the saints his portion in eternal salvation.

To You, O Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be all glory and honor, both now and forever.

C Amen.

Installation of the Pastor of a Congregation at Ordination

Sit

The ministers and the newly ordained stand. The presiding minister addresses the congregation:

Address

P Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, [name] has been called to be (a) pastor of [name of congregation(s)]. I ask you now, in the presence of God: Will you receive him, show him that love, honor, and obedience in the Lord that you owe to the shepherd and teacher placed over you by your Lord Jesus Christ, and will you support him by your gifts and fervent prayer? If so, then answer: We will, with the help of God.

C We will, with the help of God.

When appropriate, the following may also be asked of the congregation.

P Will you honor and uphold your pastor as he serves Christ in all his God-pleasing responsibilities? Will you aid him as he cares for his family? Will you be diligent to “put the best construction on everything,” recognizing that “love covers a multitude of sins”? If so, then answer: We will, with the help of God.

C We will, with the help of God.

P The almighty and most merciful God strengthen and assist you always.

The presiding minister asks the newly ordained:

P Are you willing and ready to assume this public trust and responsibility?

R *I am.*

Installation

P *[Full name of newly ordained]*, I install you as (a) pastor of *[name of congregation(s)]*, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

C **Amen.**

Please stand as able

The presiding minister prays one or both of the following.

Collect

P Let us pray.

Merciful God and Father, You have graciously promised that through the preaching of the crucified Christ, those who believe in Him will be saved. By Your Holy Spirit grant grace to *[name]*, whom You have given to be pastor of *[this congregation / these congregations]*. Grant him readiness and steadfastness in this ministry, patience, understanding, and great zeal. Support and strengthen him in Your service that by Your Word Your Church may be built and increased; through Your Son, our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C **Amen.**

P Almighty and most merciful God and Father, through Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, You have established Your Church to be a temple and dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. We give thanks that You continue to provide shepherds to feed and serve Your flock in which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers. We humbly implore You ever to strengthen the labors of Your ministers, that through their ministry of Word and Sacrament Your people may increase in Your knowledge and service and grow up into Him who is the head, even Jesus Christ, to whom, with You and the Holy Spirit, be all glory now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Blessing

P Go, therefore, and be a shepherd of the Good Shepherd's flock. Preach the Word of God; administer the holy Sacraments; offer prayer for all the faithful; instruct, watch over, and guide the flock over which the Holy Spirit has placed you. Do it not for earthly gain but with great joy, for you have been called not to lordship but to serve His flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.

The almighty and most merciful God, the Father, the ✠ Son, and the Holy Spirit, bless and preserve you.

C **Amen.**

768 To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray



1 To God the Ho - ly Spir - it let us pray
 2 O sweet - est Love, Your grace on us be - stow;
 3 Tran - scen - dent Com - fort in our ev - 'ry need,
 4 Shine in our hearts, O Spir - it, pre - cious light;



For the true faith need - ed on our way
 Set our hearts with sa - cred fire a - glow
 Help us nei - ther scorn nor death to heed
 Teach us Je - sus Christ to know a - right



That He may de - fend us when life is end - ing And from
 That with hearts u - nit - ed we love each oth - er, Ev - 'ry
 That we may not fal - ter nor cour - age fail us When the
 That we may a - bide in the Lord who bought us, Till to



ex - ile home we are wend - ing. Lord, have mer - cy!
 strang - er, sis - ter, and broth - er. Lord, have mer - cy!
 foe shall taunt and as - sail us. Lord, have mer - cy!
 our true home He has brought us. Lord, have mer - cy!

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