- B Give a clear testimony of response to the call of God to the ministry of the church
- C. Give a clear testimony of the confirmation of the call to ministry through effective ministerial experience and the affirmation, response, and support of the body of Christ (see Appendix 2)
- D. Give a clear Statement of Faith
- 2. Reparation. The candidate for ordination shall give evidence of appropriate educational preparation to fulfill the candidate's particular call. Seminary training or comparable rigorous training in theology and leadership is expected. Churches are to take seriously their collective and individual responsibility in assisting candidates to prepare for ministry through offering appropriate experiences of ministerial responsibility and evaluation of the character; call and giftedness of the individual. In this process, the seminary is clearly to be regarded as the servant of the churches.
- 3. **Pacement in a local church**. The candidate for ordination shall fulfill the following expectations:
- A. Hold membership in the ordaining church
- B Hold a formal call to ministry within the ordaining church, or the public recognition by that church of the candidate's call to some form of Christian ministry (see Appendix 2).
- C. Have received confirmation by the ordaining church that the candidate's personal qualities, character; and spiritual gifts are suitable for an ordained ministry.
- D. Demonstrate skills in
- 1. The understanding and interpretation of the Bible
- 2. The comprehension of theology and church history
- 3. The understanding of and adherence to the Converge (Baptist General Conference) statement of Baith
- 4. The distinctives of Baptist theology and practice
- 5. Oral and written communication (see Appendix 2).
- E Demonstrate an understanding of the candidate's leadership role in the life of the church, style of ministry, and personal and vocational goals (see Appendix 4).
- 4. Initiation of the Ordination Process. The authority to ordain belongs to the local church. This authority is exercised when the local church makes a formal decision to initiate ordination procedures for a candidate. It is the responsibility of the church to communicate this decision.

to Converge Northwest and to request that the District Executive or Church Strengthening Director meet with them

5. The Assistance of the District Executive or Church Strengthening Director: In ordination, the local church should proceed with careful regard for the concerns and expectations of its sister churches in Converge (Baptist General Conference). An ordained minister of one of our churches represents the entire Conference. The District Executive or Church Strengthening Director will assist the local church in maintaining the highest possible standards throughout the ordination process.

# 6 Calling the Ordination Council.

A. The ordaining church shall call an ordination council. An ordination council consists of clergy and lay delegates (at least 10) from at least four Converge Northwest churches. It is important that the council be scheduled to allow for maximum participation by both lay and clergy delegates.

B At least four weeks prior to the date of the council, the convening church shall send a written invitation to area Converge (Baptist General Conference churches, requesting that the pastor and two other delegates be sent. It is recommended that these churches be called and a commitment secured to assure a good attendance at the ordination council. The convening church shall authorize three of 4 of its leaders to be delegates. The District office and Seminary shall be notified and a representative invited.

C. The convening church shall send each responding church a set of written materials prepared by the candidate. These written materials shall consist of the candidate's Testimony of Conversation and Call, Statement of Pastoral Leadership, and Statement of Faith (see Appendix 2).

D. The convening church shall invite an appropriate person from among the delegates to serve as chair of the council, shall provide that person with the opportunity to adequately prepare for leadership of the council, and shall appoint them as chair. The convening church shall appoint someone to serve as clerk of the council.

E The District office is expected to use its resources to encourage participation by the invited churches. Further; the assistance of the District office and the area Ministerial fellowship should be sought by the ordaining church as necessary.

7. Conducting the Ordination Council. The procedure for conducting an ordination council is as follows:

A. The church chair shall organize the council by:

1. Calling for the reading of the church minutes authorizing the council.

- 2. Validating the credentials of the delegates.
- 3. Nominating the convening church's candidates for the offices of chair and clerk of the council.
- 4. Conducting the election of the chair and clerk and installing same.
- B The chair of the council shall conduct the business of the council by:
- 1. Presenting the candidate to the council to provide opportunity for determining how the candidate fulfills the norms for ordination.
- 2. Providing opportunity for the council to ask questions of the candidate for clarification of the

E. The presentation of the Certificate of Ordination to the ordained which is issued by the Converge Northwest office.

- c. A statement on your understanding of pastoral leadership
- 3 Ordination Vows
- 4. Converge (BGC) Affirmation of Faith
- 5. Affirmation of Ministerial Pathics in Converge/ Converge Northwest
- 6 Sample Letter Calling an Ordination Council
- 7. Sample Credentials
- 8 Sample Ordination Service

# Appendix 1

#### A Biblical Basis for Ordination

This manual, Ordination Policies and Procedures, begins with the statement: "Ordination of clergy is good polity." This is a confessional statement, an affirmation of belief. Since Baptists seek to ground their beliefs upon the Bible, it is appropriate to establish a Scriptural basis for the practice of ordination.

#### ANTECEDENIS, NOT PRECEDENIS

At the outset, we admowledge that no specific precedents for the modern practice of ordination are to be found in Scripture. That is to say, in the Bible we find no explicit reference to a formal service of ordination. There are, however, some definite Biblical antecedents to ordination as we practice it.

## THE CALL OF GOD

In both the Old and New Testaments, we find examples of people being specifically called to minister in the name of the Lord. Moses was called away from his flock in Midian to shepherd the people of God out of Egypt (Exodus 3). Saul and David were called by God to rule the nation (1 Samuel 9, 16). Isaiah and Jereniah each describes for us his call to the prophetic ministry

working through at this time? Describe various approaches to a life of devotion you have tried and which are working best for you. What understandings have been most important in motivating you to continue growing and to pursue ordination?

\*The road ahead. Write a statement which describes future plans you may have in pursuing your preparation for and entry into or continuation in ministry? You might address further education you plan to pursue. Discuss howyour spouse and your family are relating to your pursuit of ministry. If you had control over your life and ministry howwould you like to see God use you in the years ahead?

Statement of Faith

**Purpose** 

C. Personal and Professional Goals: Write a statement describing your personal and professional goals for the immediate future and in later years. Howwill you pursue growth in your ability to minister effectively? Howwill you relate to others with whom you minister? What steps do you intend to take in terms of continuing education, accountability structures and personal disciplines to "watch your life and doctrine closely...(so that you might) save both yourself and your hearers." (2 Timothy 4: 13-16)? What are your plans to provide for and protect your family? In what ways will you pursue relationships in Converge (Paptist General Conference) and with ministers in your area? Howwill you evaluate your own effectiveness as a minister and a Christian?

D. Goals for Your Ministry. Write a statement about the strengths and weaknesses of your church or the ministry you will seek to pursue. Describe goals you may set to address the needs of that ministry and the way you intend to address those goals. Describe howyour gifts and personality hopefully will be used of God to build up this part of the body of Christ.

Adapted from A Manual of Pastoral Problems and Procedures, Lloyd M. Peny and Edward J. Lias (Grand Rapids: Baker Good House, 1967), page 10.

### Appendix 3

### Suggested Ordination Vows

Moved by your love for God and a sincere desire to proclaim the Gospel of Salvation among all people, are you now ready to take upon you this holy ministry and faithfully serve in it?

#### I amready, the Lord being my helper:

Will you tend the flock of Christ committed to your care, taking the oversight thereof not by constraint but willingly, not for worldly gain but that men and women may be made free in Him?

#### I will, the Lord being my helper:

Will you make faithful effort duly to administer the ordinances in purity, to preach the Word of the everlasting God, to proclaim the Gospel of Christ, to lead disciples into the presence of God and His healing Spirit, to minister to them the truth of God as contained in the Holy Scriptures, to guide them in the way of life which is Christ, that they may be found in Him and be claimed for service in His Kingdom?

## I shall so endeavor; the Lord being my helper:

Do you promise to be diligent in prayer; in the reading of the Scriptures, and in such studies and devotions as will increase your knowledge of God and His Kingdom?

### I do so promise.

Will you endeavor in the strength and grace of Jesus Christ our Lord to live a life of sincere discipleship, to be loyal to the call of duty, and to faithfully discharge all the work of the ministry entrusted to you?

- 6 Regeneration We believe that all people are sinners by nature and by choice and are, therefore, under condemnation. We believe that those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.
- 7. The Church We believe in the universal church, a living spiritual body of which Christ is the

The following standards are set forth in an effort to create professional understanding and to preserve the dignity, maintain the discipline and promote the integrity of our chosen profession—the ministry of Jesus Christ.

## My Person

I will encleavor to pray daily, to read, study and meditate upon God's Word; and to maintain extended times of contemplation.

I will plan times 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 through 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 growthrough comprehensive reading and through 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, pomography and sexual sin.

## 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 to them

I will be honest in my stewardship of money, paying bills promptly, asking no personal favors or discounts on the basis of my professional status.

I will give tithes and 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 refiain 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 (Baptist General Conference) and of the district in which I serve and offer responsible criticism in order that our common service in the kingdom of God might be more effective. In the event that I seriously violate the vows I have

made to God and my church; I will submit to the restoration/reconciliation process establish	ed