

# **The Practical Implications of Ordination/Installation**

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When this paper was assigned to me, I was sure that many others had written on the subject matter and that research would be easy. I was wrong. Nor am I the first to discover this. Prof. Joel Gerlach stated the same in his paper "The Servant's Call" delivered to the Michigan Pastor-Teacher Conference in 1977.

Perhaps the reason for this is that the matter of ordination and installation, together with the doctrine of the call without which there could be no ordination or installation, was not a problem in our fellowship. It was not until those outside our fellowship, particularly the state, had difficulty understanding our position on the ministry that we began to wrestle with our terminology.

I do not pretend to have all the answers to these problems. I think it well that we review the doctrine of the call, the call to the ministry of the Word that all believers have and the call into the public ministry. Then we can turn our attention to ordination/installation and its practical implications.

## **I**

We are well acquainted with the Office of the Keys, which is the power, or authority, to preach the Word of God, to administer the sacraments, and especially the power to forgive or retain sins. Jesus gave the believers the command: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I will be with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matt. 28:19-20). It was Jesus who also said to His followers: "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mk. 16:15). Jesus specifically gives to His disciples the power to open the door of heaven by forgiving sins, and to close the door of heaven by the retaining of sins when on Easter night He appeared to them and said: "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you...Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven" (John 20:21-23) .

In speaking to His disciples, Jesus was giving a general command to all Christians for all times. All Christians have the keys as individuals. All believers are called to the ministry of the Word. Every believing member of our congregations is a priest before God with singular rights, privileges, duties and honors. What a magnificent, astounding doctrine of God's Word. Think of it! God has made His former enemies His agents to dispense His mercy to others. In the grace of the Savior Jesus Christ all believers make up a "kingdom of priests". Ponder the high titles which God bestows to every believer through His spokesman Peter: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:8,9). Thus we speak of the universal priesthood of all believers. What a high honor belongs to every Christian, and yet so undeserved. We have good reason to join the sacred writer John in this doxology: "To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father - to Him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen" (Rev. 1:5,6).

It is good for us pastors and teachers to keep in mind this universal priesthood of all believers. We are not better than the lay members of our congregations. We do not have a greater right, duty, or authority to serve in the church and to bear witness to the good news of salvation in Christ Jesus than any other member of the church. Luther gives some insight into this when he wrote: "As soon as we have become Christians through this Priest (our Savior Jesus Christ) and His priesthood, and in Baptism through faith have been ingrafted into Him, we have the right to teach and confess the Word... for though we are not all in the public office or calling, still every Christian should teach, instruct, exhort, comfort, reprove his neighbor through God's word whenever and wherever one is in need of it, as a father and mother do with their children and servants, and a brother, neighbor,

sister, or peasant with another” (*Luther’s Works*, St. Louis Edition, V. 1038). So every Christian has a call to the ministry of the Gospel of our Savior.

## II

Now what if every member of the congregation would insist that he has the right to preach in the public service, or to administer the Sacraments? What chaos that would be! There would be nothing but confusion, disorder and strife. “God is not a God of disorder but of peace” (I Cor. 14:33) . So in His wisdom God has established the holy ministry for the public administration of the priestly rites that belong to all believers in Christ.

So we speak of a call into the public ministry. Profs. Schuetze and Habeck (*Shepherd Under Christ*) tell us: “This ministry does not set up a priestly caste apart from the laity, for, as noted above, all Christians are priests of God. The difference lies in the Word “public”. The public ministry is a service performed in the church, in behalf of fellow Christians, in their name. Like the public official in a state who functions in the name of his fellow citizens that have elected him, so the minister has an office in which he carries out responsibilities that have been entrusted to him by fellow Christians. These responsibilities are not essentially different from those Christ committed to every Christian. The minister too is to serve in the Gospel as did Paul and Timothy (Ph. 2:19-23); to labor in the Word and doctrine (I Tim. 5:17); to speak the Word of God (He. 13:17). But the minister does this in the church, in behalf of the church, and as a representative of the church” (p. 21-22).

A person doesn’t claim for himself the right to administer the keys in the name of the congregation. Since he is representing his fellow Christians in carrying out duties that are common to all of them, he must be called by these Christians to represent them. In Romans 10:15 Paul writes: “How can they preach unless they are sent?” The Augsburg Confession Article XIV states: “Our churches teach that nobody should preach publicly in the church or administer the sacraments unless he is regularly called.” It doesn’t make any difference how long you have gone to school, how many degrees you have that brings you into the public ministry. It isn’t even your desire to serve the Lord that makes one a public servant of the Word. It is the call.

In Old Testament days the prophets received their calls directly from God. We think of Isaiah (Is. 6:8) and Jeremiah (Jer. 1:4-10). When Christ came He called His disciples directly. (Mt. 10:1). The apostle Paul received his call directly from God in a most extraordinary manner on the way to Damascus (Acts 9). Since Jesus’ ascension into heaven, God no longer uses an immediate call to provide for public servants, but He is pleased to extend a call through the medium of men, the Christians, those to whom He has entrusted the Gospel. The 1<sup>st</sup> chapter of Acts shows how God calls men into the ranks of the holy ministry through believers. We still follow this example today. A vacancy had occurred in the ranks of the holy ministry, the ranks of the original twelve Apostles, caused by the treachery and suicide of Judas. This vacancy had to be filled.

So a congregational meeting was held in Jerusalem with about 120 persons in attendance. Peter was the leader of the group and outlined for them the circumstances which led to the vacancy -- the tragic story of Judas Iscariot. He pointed out that this had occurred in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy, which had also decreed: “May another take his place of leadership.” (Ps. 109:8). And so they came together to elect another man to take over the ministry of Judas.

They had certain qualifications for this man to be elected to this high office. He had to be someone who had accompanied the apostles all the while Jesus had been with them, from the time of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan until the day of His ascension. They looked for a man who had received the grace and power of the Holy Spirit into his heart.

Now they drew up a list of candidates who met these qualifications, much as congregations do today when they want to call someone into the pastoral ministry or into the teaching ministry. There were just two names on that list for the congregation at Jerusalem: Joseph called Barsabas and Matthias. Now whenever Christian people have a matter of great importance to decide, even as congregations do today, they prayed that God would guide them in their choice: “Loud, you know everyone’s heart. Show us which of these two you

have chosen to take over this apostolic ministry.” They trusted that the man they would choose would be God’s choice. Note the words: “Which... you have chosen.”

Thus having sanctified their procedure with the Word of God and prayer, they proceeded to vote: “they drew their lots.” And when the vote was counted, Matthias was elected. The congregation had elected him to this high office, by the direction of God. Thus God works in this way in calling men into His service and in continuing the office of the holy ministry among us. Though men are instrumental in calling the public servants of the Word, yet God has His hand in it. The call is divine. Paul makes this clear when he speaks to the elders at Ephesus: “Guard yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers” (Acts 20:28) . This divine call extended by every group of Christians will designate the place, form and scope of the ministry that is to be rendered. There are different areas of service, all required “to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ might be built up” (Eph. 4:12). Paul mentions some of the different forms and scopes of the ministry in the 11<sup>th</sup> verse: “It was He (Christ) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.” Paul recognized that the scope of his ministry had limitations. He writes in 1 Corinthians 1:13-17: “Were you baptized into the name of Paul? I am thankful that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, so no one can say that you were baptized into my name. Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanus; beyond that, I don’t remember if I baptized anyone else. For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the Gospel--not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.” So Paul’s main duty was to preach the Gospel.

The call will state where the person is to serve. It will also state the form and scope of his ministry. The most common form is that of pastor in a congregation. In our midst there are other forms of the full-time ministry. We also call associate pastors, assistant pastors, professors, executive secretaries, editors, ministers of education, men teachers, women teachers, missionaries, mission developers, chaplains, administrators and others. The service a pastor is called to render is very broad in scope; that of the professor and teacher and other offices is generally more limited. The call spells this out.

Here I would like to call attention to some eloquent words by Prof. Joel Gerlach in a paper “Practical Applications of the Teacher’s Call” delivered to the Wisconsin State Teacher’s Conference in 1974. He writes: “What the pastor-teacher relationship should be is clear from the Scriptures. Nowhere in those portions of Scripture which give us an insight into the arrangement of things in the early church are we given the impression of rank or ranks among called servants. A noteworthy passage is Acts 20:21-28 which records the account of Paul’s meeting at Miletus with the elders of Ephesus. Paul charges them ‘Take heed unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers, to feed the church of God.’ The Greek word for overseer is *episkopos*, or bishop. We commonly regard the word bishop as a title designating a position of high rank. It is apparent that Paul did not use it in that way. His intention was to point up the responsibility of these overseers as servants. They were to feed, *poimanio*, that is, to shepherd the church of God. The thought of domination or control is completely foreign to that word.

“It is clear that Paul is telling about a responsibility that all share together as called servants of the Word. Whether one of the elders was a pastor, another a preacher, and another a teacher is not clear. Obviously to Paul it doesn’t make any difference. Nor does it make any difference to us today. In our churches pastors and teachers, male and female, are called servants of the Word who share a responsibility together. In Paul’s terms both pastors and teachers are elders, bishops, presbyters. And because things were done in an orderly fashion in the Ephesus church, the specific tasks of the several elders were spelled out by the congregation just as we still do it today in our churches.

“The practical application of the teacher’s call requires that we understand that these elders were all equal in standing. No elder dominated other elders, There was no hierarchical system for anyone to sit on top of. The fathers of our church saw it this way too. Quenstedt the dogmatician says that, ‘Of these presbyters appointed by Christ through the apostles, not one had authority, control, or jurisdiction over his fellow elders, but they all had one and the same rank, the same solicitude for ail members of the flock and for each individual member; ...But because there were many, it was necessary that one should be first, another second, and another

third, in rank and honor, not in authority, power or jurisdiction.’ (*Antiquitates*, 87f. quoted in “The Ministry of the Lutheran Teacher,” A. C. Mueller, Concordia p. 150).

“This does not mean your office as a teacher is identical in terms of specific responsibilities to that of the pastor. His call spells out the scope of his office and your call spells out the scope of yours. Because the scope of the pastor’s call is broader than that of the teacher’s, our fathers designated pastors as *primus inter pares* (first among equals) in the congregation. He is a servant of the Word who performs pastoral tasks. You are a servant of the Word who performs other tasks on the basis of a shared responsibility. But as Quenstedt reminds us, you both have the ‘same solicitude for all the members of the flock.’ That does not mean that you will insinuate yourself into an area of service assigned to the pastor or vice versa. It means simply that because you have been called like the pastor to be a leader, your interest and concern extend beyond the walls of the school to the whole congregation. You are just as interested in an 83 year old grandmother’s growth in grace as you are in your third grader’s.

“Shared responsibility has its concomitants. Full cooperation between pastor and teacher is one. Close harmony is another. According to Paul this means you will be kindly affectioned (devoted) one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another’ (Rom. 12:10) . Phillips paraphrases: it beautifully: ‘Let us have real warm affection for one another as between brothers, and a willingness to let the other man have the credit.’ I cannot think of any sin more ugly than that of patent disharmony between those called by God to serve His people cooperatively and harmoniously. Again, I heartily recommend to you the essay by Pastor Robert Voss to which we referred earlier. He puts the whole matter succinctly when he says, ‘There ought to be harmony out of respect for the call.’ (op. cit. p. 9)” (Practical Application of the Teacher’s Call Prof. Joel Gerlach, 1974, P. 8 & 9).

### III

We have spent considerable time in discussing the doctrine of the call, the call of all Christians to the ministry of the Word (the universal priesthood) and the call into the public ministry. We have done that because without a call, neither an ordination nor an installation is valid. Here our terminology comes in. In our circles we have decided that installation and ordination are in essence the same, and we merely use the term ordination to designate a pastor’s first installation. Ordination/installation are rites which we practice but which are not commanded by God. They are customs of long standing in the Christian Church, although in the apostolic church they were not called by those names. We would classify ordination/installation among the *adiaphora* and affirm that not the ordination, but the call makes a person a minister of the Word.

We find that these ancient rites were practiced as the early Christian Church grew and chose helpers for the apostles. The form and scope of the work of these chosen men was “to wait on tables”. This proposal (coming from the apostles) pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles, “who prayed and laid their hands on them” (Acts 6:5-6). The apostle Paul was called directly by the Lord Jesus and could say that he received his ministry from no man. Yet he was installed into his office as a world missionary when he set out with Barnabas on his first missionary journey, The 13<sup>th</sup> chapter, of Acts gives us this information: “While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said: ‘Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ So after they fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off” (vs. 2-3). Following the ancient example we may ordain or install persons called to the office of the public ministry, but we would look in vain for a command from God that it must be done this way and no other.

Roman Catholic doctrine on ordination has affected the thinking of many, and, no doubt, also those in the state with whom we must deal. This church body teaches that ordination is a sacrament by which a character is implanted that cannot be taken away, a *character indelebilis*, which makes the person ordained a priest forever, and by which he receives the supernatural power to transubstantiate the bread and the wine in the Lord’s Supper. The *Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge* tell us: “The Greek and Roman Catholic Churches hold ordination one of the seven sacraments. The Council of Trent declared that by it “a

character is imprinted which can neither be effaced nor taken away”: the words of the bishop, “Receive ye the Holy Ghost,” impart this character; hence those who have been duly ordained can never again become laymen (session XXIII, *Doctrina de sacramento ordinis*). The “character” is independent of the person or life of either, the ordinant or candidate, and, like baptism, ordination may not be repeated. To ordain belongs to the bishop and “every bishop has the power” (Vol. VIII p. 255).

Pastor Harold Wicke in his paper “The Call and Its Variables” (1979) traces the history of this Roman Catholic thought that the ordination definitely sets the Roman clergy apart from the priesthood of all believers. “One of the first persons in church history to insist upon a strict division between clergy and laity, who also wrote about ordination, is the third-century church father Cyprian. He tells us that when a bishop was ordained, the laying on of hands was performed by the neighboring bishops, at least three. The congregation was involved in the election of bishops, but not in the appointment of lesser clerics. A few centuries later, by the time (of) Augustine, the rite had been developed still farther, so that ordination was spoken of as parallel with baptism. Baptism made its recipient a member of the general priesthood of all believers, ordination made him a member of the public priesthood. Both bestowed indelible characters. After the fifth century the tonsure was added, “the narrower the hair, the higher your clerical rank” (p. 11). One will look unsuccessfully for such thinking in the Scriptures.

For this reason Dr. John T. Mueller in *Christian Dogmatics* (p. 575) writes: “The confessional Lutheran Church does not practice the so-called absolute ordination, ordination of a person who as yet has received no call, since this might create wrong impressions as though by the ordination the ordained is received into a spiritual estate and made a consecrated priest, who is eligible for a call by a congregation just because of special virtues conferred by the ordination.”

The real meaning of ordination is brought out in the *Smalcald Articles* where Luther states: “Here belong the statements of Christ which testify that the keys have been given to the Church, and not merely to certain persons, Matthew 18:20: “Where two or three are gathered together in My name, etc.” Lastly, the statement of Peter also confirms this: 1 Peter 2:9: “Ye are a royal priesthood”. These words pertain to the true Church, which certainly has the right to elect and ordain ministers since it alone has the priesthood. And this also a most common custom of the Church testifies. For formerly the people elected pastors and bishops. Then came a bishop, either of that church or a neighboring one, who confirmed the one elected by the laying on of hands; and ordination was nothing else than such a ratification” (*Of the Power and Jurisdiction of Bishops* 68-70) (underlining mine).

Luther also stated (St. Louis, XVII, 114), “The laying on of hands (ordination) blesses, confirms, and attests this (the call to office) just as a notary and witnesses attest a worldly matter and a pastor, when he blesses a bridegroom and bride, confirms or attests this marriage, that is, that they before took each other and publicly announced it.”

Profs. Schuetze and Habeck (*The Shepherd Under Christ*, pp. 49-50) put it this way: “Although the congregation’s call which the pastor accepted makes him pastor of the congregation, the formal entrance upon the ministry customarily occurs through the rite of installation .... The first-installation of a man into the ministry is designated as his ordination. There is no essential difference between the ordination and any subsequent installation of the same pastor. The rite of ordination confers the pastoral office on an individual no more than does the rite of installation. The call, not ordination, does this. We view the ordination and every installation as public recognition or confirmation of the validity and legitimacy of the call that was sent and accepted ...Hence no ordination should be performed without a preceding call.”

Ordination/installation then does have its purpose. Professors Schuetze and Habeck state that early leaders of the Lutheran Church, Walther and Schaller, listed these basic purposes: 1) to give public testimony of the pastor’s fitness for office, 2) to give public recognition of the call for reassurance of both pastor and congregation, 3) to offer intercession for the ministry by the entire congregation and 4) (added by Schaller) to give public confession to pure doctrine and the promise of faithfulness.

To review, then, it is the call of a congregation or of another calling body and the acceptance of the call that makes a person a pastor, teacher, professor, etc. Ordination is a church rite which is essentially no different

than installation. It is a rite which is practiced but not commanded - hence an adiaphoron. It is a custom which is of long standing in the Christian Church.

#### IV

As we begin to look at some of the practical implications, one Scripture passage must come to the fore in our thinking - 1 Cor. 14:40: "Let all things be done decently and in order." Keeping that in mind one part of our Synod will not go off in one direction in their practice and another in a different direction. This could only cause confusion and we do not want that in the church.

Recently legal considerations have caused problems. I refer especially to the unemployment compensation issue. To me, and I don't consider myself a legal expert, the problem seems to stem from the fact that we do not call the installation of teachers an ordination. The state has difficulty understanding that it is the extending of a divine call and the acceptance of that call which brings a person into the pastoral ministry or into the teaching ministry of our church body. Certainly we do "ordain" men into the pastoral ministry; we could also "ordain" men and women into the teaching ministry, calling it ordination.

Now someone might question "ordaining" a woman into the ministry. "That is not our Wisconsin Synod doctrine," they will say. Now we will have to start explaining to our brethren, because historically we have never spoken of "ordaining" a woman. So we go back to the divine call which a woman also receives, and that call delineates her teaching ministry as to form and scope, and that will be according to our biblical Wisconsin Synod doctrine. Remember, it is the divine call and the acceptance of it that brings her into the teaching ministry.

But do you see what is happening? Now we would be explaining to our Wisconsin Synod people. I would rather be explaining to the state than cause confusion among our own people. Pastor Robert J. Voss put it quite to the point when he said: "Should we desire to change a long-standing custom of the church, we should have good reasons for doing so, reasons which would be clear to almost everyone. Moreover, we should be governed by love and consideration" (*Ordination*, 1975).

Personally I would question our reasons to change our terminology. We may satisfy the state in regard to the unemployment compensation issue now. But as long as the state needs money (and I guess they always will), they will pick up another issue and we will have to start all over explaining to them once more. Tax exemption for teacherages, parsonages, churches, schools; the draft of pastors and teachers, male and female; Social Security and the list can go on and on, will be issues that will rise up again and again.

Some questions have been raised concerning the proper, place of ordination. In order that things might be done decently and in order, the Conference of Presidents has adopted the regulation that the ordination take place in the congregation in which he received his first call. To do it in the home congregation of the individual, away from the calling congregation, might give the impression that the ordination confers the Roman Catholic *character indelebilis* on him.

Other problems may arise however. What if there is no congregation where he is going? He is to start a mission congregation. Where shall he be ordained? Proper authorities will have to make the decision. Perhaps here we may follow the practice we have followed in our short history of world missions: World missionaries usually do have a congregation in the foreign field that they will be serving. Yet they are often ordained and commissioned in their home congregation. That is our historical practice, short as its history may be. It could be followed in the case of a home missionary starting a new mission.

A rather interesting situation is that of tutors. There is no connection to a specific congregation. Yet they do have a divine call. This is their first assignment, although they must be assigned by the Assignment Committee again. Technically we could ordain them. I do feel that things should be done decently and in order. If one school calls it ordination, then all schools should do the same. I had the privilege of tutoring as an undergraduate at Michigan Lutheran Seminary and then as a graduate tutor at Northwestern College. The only rite used at that time was that I was "introduced" to the student body as the new tutor. The work was done even though I was only introduced.

I think our convention should be aware of the fact that the Conference of Presidents has been spending considerable time wrestling with some of these problems. In order that things be done decently and in order they have adopted theses on Ordination and Installation into the Public Ministry of the WELS. I include it for your information.

### **Ministry in the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod**

#### The Ministry

1. Every Christian is a minister of the Gospel to his fellowmen by virtue of Christ's commission to be witnesses for Him.
2. Christ, as Lord of the church, has established a public ministry of the Gospel administered by called Christians as differentiated from the general ministry of all Christians. (The public ministry is a ministry conducted publicly on behalf of and in the name of fellow Christians).

#### The Call to the Ministry

3. The public ministry requires a "call" from a group of fellow Christians and is not self-assumed.
4. The call to the public ministry, as opposed to any rite such as ordination, establishes a person as a minister of the Gospel.

#### Full-Time Ministry

5. The call to the full-time ministry names a person a full-time minister of the Gospel and establishes the scope of his ministry.
6. Full-time ministry includes the pastoral ministry, the teaching ministry, an administrative ministry, or other special ministries (e.g. chaplains).

### **The Pastoral Ministry**

#### The Office of the Pastor

7. The office of the pastoral ministry requires graduate training in the theological disciplines.
8. Training in these theological disciplines is a necessary qualification for the office of the pastoral ministry.
9. A qualified person is officially designated by the Synod as a candidate for the holy ministry (*Candidatus reverendi ministerii*).
10. A qualified candidate is called by the church to the office of the pastoral ministry.

#### Ordination to the Pastoral Ministry

11. A candidate called to the pastoral ministry is ordained into the public ministry of the church.
12. Ordination is authorized by the chief administrative officer of the geographical district in which the ordination takes place. (Authorization is a declaration on behalf of the entire church body that the church body recognizes the ordinand as a properly qualified and a called public minister of the church.)
13. Ordination in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is a rite by which:

##### I. The church publicly declares:

- a. that the ordinand has been properly trained in the theological disciplines,
- b. that the ordinand qualifies to assume the office of the pastoral ministry,
- c. that the ordinand has been properly called into the pastoral ministry.

##### II. The ordinand publicly vows:

- a. that he adheres to and professes all the teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church revealed in the Bible and contained in the *Book of Concord* of 1580.
- b. that he will teach and practice accordingly.

14. Ordination in the Lutheran Church generally and in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod specifically is a term historically restricted to the occasion when a candidate for the holy ministry (crm) is formally inducted into the pastoral ministry for the first time.
15. The rite employed when a minister, subsequent to his ordination, accepts a call to a pastoral ministry in a new field is designated an installation.
16. Subsequent installations, as well as initial ordinations, are authorized by the presiding officer of the geographical district in which the installation takes place.

### **The Teaching Ministry**

#### The Office of the Teacher

17. The office of the teaching ministry requires a four year college training in Christian education and doctrine according to the standards established by the church.
18. Training in these disciplines qualifies a person for the office of the teaching ministry.
19. The teaching ministry as well as the pastoral ministry are forms of the public ministry of the church.
20. A qualified candidate is called by the church to the office of the teaching ministry.
21. A teaching minister is called into the office of the teaching ministry in the same manner a pastor is called into the pastoral ministry.

#### Installation into the Teaching Ministry

- 22.. A person called into the full-time ministry is installed into the public ministry of the church.
23. Installation into the teaching ministry is authorized by the chief administrative officer of the geographical district in which the installation takes place. (Authorization is a declaration on behalf of the entire Synod that the church body as a whole recognizes the installee as a properly qualified and properly called public minister of the church).
- 24: Installation to the teaching ministry in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is a rite by which:
  - I. The church publicly declares:
    - a. that the teaching minister is properly trained for the teaching ministry of the church.
    - b. that the teaching minister qualifies to assume the office of the teaching ministry.
    - c. that the teaching minister has been properly called into the teaching ministry.
  - II. The teaching minister publicly vows:
    - a. that he adheres to and professes the teachings of the Evangelical Lutheran Church,
    - b. that he is willing to fulfill faithfully the duties of the teaching ministry in accordance with his call. The rite of installation into the teaching ministry is the public ceremony whereby the installee is formally inducted into his or her office (cf. thesis 14).
26. The rite of installation in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is therefore tantamount to the rite of ordination as that term is employed outside our church body (cf. theses 13 & 24).
27. Full-time teaching ministers of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod are therefore ministers of the Gospel no less than full-time pastoral ministers, all listed in the official Yearbook of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

In conclusion, let me say, that one place there should be no problem among us is worrying about who is ordained or who is installed. We are all servants of the Lord. The ideal of service is still the great objective to be sought by those who would be true and worthy ministers, whether in the pastoral ministry or in the teaching ministry. True service involves humility. It involves unselfishness, thinking of the rights and privileges of others, and not primarily of one's own. Service involves consideration, the application of the Golden Rule. Service means hard work for the general welfare of Christ's Church on earth. If there is to be any rivalry between pastors and teachers let it be in contending who can be most faithful to his Lord. For God's primary

concern is found in the words: "It is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful" (1 Cor. 4: 2) . Christ has created each one of us for service, happy, fruitful service to Him. He suffered and died to give you a new life, a new relationship with the Father. And now He asks, not the impossible, but to work fully through you, that you "prove faithful". May the most cherished degree you ever receive be our "Master's degree." Not a D.D. or a BSE, but a W.D.: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

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