Rite of Installation for a Called Elder Servant of the Word

This installation shall be administered under the guidance of the supervising pastor. If he cannot be present, the congregation's President or another church elder can conduct. Please be sure that the man or men who are being called are given a copy of this, so that they are clear beforehand about what will be asked of them in public, including the items which are checked below. A suggested time for the installation is during the worship service, after the Lord's Prayer and prior to the Benediction. The person conducting shall ask the candidate to come forward and shall say:

Dear Brother(s): **[plural if more than one man is being asked to serve]**

You have been called by this congregation to serve in various areas of the ministry of God's Word among us during this time when we are without a regularly-called pastor. We are entrusting these duties to you, dear brother, with the understanding that you will be guided in your work by our vacancy pastor when he is absent from us: [Name: _____] **[or – by our Conference Visitor, Name: _____]**

It is fitting that you should be reminded of the solemn duties we are asking you to do, so that you may carry them out in a manner that is fitting for a faithful servant of Christ. We are asking you to: **[circle and read all that may apply]**

- Conduct our regular worship services and deliver an edifying sermon,
- Administer the Lord's Supper in our worship services according to our customary schedule,
- Visit our shut-in members, the sick and those hospitalized to give them scriptural devotions for their spiritual strengthening and comfort,
- Lead our Sunday or weekday Bible class for our instruction in the Word of God,
- Supervise our Sunday School program, giving guidance to those who teach,
  Conduct Catechism classes for our youth, preparing them for communicant membership in our church,
- Give your aid and scriptural counsel to those who request guidance from the Word of God,
- Lead us in outreach efforts for the growth of God's kingdom among us,
  Report regularly to our Church Council and voters about the state of the congregation and its members, and
- Have in your heart and in your prayers at all times the spiritual welfare of every soul whom you serve.

You are to devote yourself to the meditation and study of the Scriptures, to carry out your duties in conformity with the Word of God. You are to be an example to others in godliness and Christian living, putting no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that the ministry of this congregation will not be discredited.

The Apostle Paul writes in Titus chapter 1, verses 6-9, "*(An elder) is above reproach, the husband of one wife, and his children are believers and not open to the charge of debauchery or insubordination. For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it.*

I ask you, therefore, dear brother, in the presence of God and this congregation: Are you willing and ready to assume this responsibility and to faithfully carry out these duties of service to our congregation? If so, then answer "**I am**."

Will you preach and teach the pure Word of God in accordance with the Confessions of this Evangelical Lutheran Church, and will you give faithful witness in the world, that God's love may be known in all that you do? If so, then answer "**Yes, with the help of God**."

[Address the congregation]
And now, to the members of [Name of the church: _____]

You have heard the solemn promise given by the man you have called to be your Elder. I admonish and urge you, therefore, to receive him as a servant of God's Word among you, in the capacity to which he has been called. Keep both him and this congregation in your daily prayers, and give to him the honor and respect of which the Apostle Paul writes in 1 Thessalonians chapter 5, verses 12-13, *"We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves."*

[Address the applicant]
And now, dear brother, by virtue of your call to serve in these areas, I now install you as a called Elder servant of God's Word for this congregation in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, amen.

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in you what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

[Address the congregation]
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 your servant whom you have given to serve this congregation in its time of need. Grant

him readiness and steadfastness in his service. Give him 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, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.