

07 Bishop Elder and Deacon Credentialing and Ordination Manual

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Purpose and offices

This Manual governs examination, recognition, ordination, credentials, review, and records. It recognizes bishop and deacon offices; elder denotes the qualified bishop oversight described in the Constitution. Ordination recognizes proved qualification and does not confer salvation, manufacture spiritual fitness, or establish apostolic succession.

PRAECEPTORIUS membership is restricted to bishops and elders expressly admitted. Deacon ordination never confers Circle membership. Administrative assignment and Circle admission require their own decisions.

Qualification for bishop or elder

Examine the complete requirements in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 KJB: blameless conduct, marital faithfulness, vigilance, sobriety, good behaviour, hospitality, teaching ability, sound household oversight, maturity, good report, faithful stewardship, freedom from greed and violence, patience, and holding fast the faithful word to exhort and convince by sound doctrine.

TGBC's adopted interpretation of husband of one wife requires careful examination of the man and present qualification rather than automatic universal exclusion from a bare history of divorce or remarriage. It does not excuse unfaithfulness, exploitation, disorder, or failure to meet the full qualifications.

Qualification for deacon

Examine 1 Timothy 3:8-13 KJB, including gravity, truthfulness, sobriety, freedom from greed, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience, prior proving, blameless service, marital faithfulness, and household responsibility. Assign practical service duties with explicit limits. A deacon does not become an elder merely because he serves faithfully or can teach in an authorized setting.

Application and doctrinal examination

Receive the candidate's identity, contact information, testimony of salvation, office sought, study and ministry history, household matters relevant to qualification, prior credentials, restrictions, references, and doctrinal affirmation. Collect no unrelated sensitive data. An application confers no office.

Examine KJB authority, the Gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 KJB, grace through faith apart from works, right division, Paul's ministry, the Mystery, Israel and the Body of Christ, assurance, the catching away, and TGBC's positions on ordinances and offices. Record reservations, answers, supporting Scripture, and evidence rather than merely ticking an approval box.

Examiners and decision authority

During the founder's life, he appoints qualified examiners and approves the recognition or ordination decision. In the initial sole-member stage he may conduct the examination and invite qualified outside bishops or elders for advice. Such assistance does not automatically admit anyone to PRAECEPTORIUS. Additional independent examination is required for a sole remaining Circle member's permanent succession decision under the Succession Declaration.

After the founder's death, the Overseeing Bishop and Circle administer the process; bishop or elder recognition and ordination require extraordinary Circle approval. A deacon recognition may be approved by the Overseeing

Bishop within a written Circle delegation; otherwise obtain recorded Circle approval. No candidate may approve his own qualification or certificate.

Findings and record

The decision shall identify the candidate, exact office, examiners, evidence considered, qualifications established, unresolved concerns, result, assigned work, limits, and effective date. Defer or decline when qualification is not established. Approval for examination, ministry assistance, ordination, credentials, and Circle admission must not be conflated.

Use a permanent record number and retain the application, doctrinal answers, reference review, recommendation, approval, and actual ordination record. Recognition of another body's ordination requires examination and a distinct TGBC recognition decision; do not redate or claim TGBC performed the earlier act.

Ordination and certificates

Conduct the approved ordination or formal recognition in an orderly manner. Record the actual date, location, presiding officer, participating persons, Scripture used, decision reference, and limits. The certificate must match that actual record.

Issue a bishop or elder certificate for bishop oversight and a distinct deacon certificate for service. PRAECEPTORIUS may appear as the issuing body on a deacon certificate, but the certificate shall expressly state that it does not admit the recipient to PRAECEPTORIUS. A ministry credential records current authority; it does not independently prove a separate ordination.

Scriptural charge and continuing fitness

Use the applicable Pauline charge: 1 Timothy 3:1-13 KJB; Titus 1:5-9 KJB for bishops and elders; 1 Timothy 5:21 KJB; 1 Timothy 6:9-21 KJB; 2 Timothy 4:1-2 KJB; and Titus 2:1-5 KJB for sound teaching and conduct as applicable. The Scripture Supplement preserves the full charge passages for use with certificates.

Review current doctrine, conduct, assignment, and any limitations at least annually. The review date is administrative and does not erase the historical fact of ordination. Qualification may be reviewed earlier on substantial evidence. Do not promise lifetime credential validity regardless of later conduct.

Suspension withdrawal and restoration

Use the Discipline Code for notice, fair examination, temporary protection, findings, and reconsideration. Record the effect separately on ordination recognition, current credentials, assignments, Circle membership, and fellowship. A suspended bishop or elder does not vote in the Circle during a valid suspension. Restoration requires an affirmative decision and, where needed, renewed proving; time alone does not restore status.

Keep historic ordination facts while stating present status truthfully. A withdrawn credential may not be represented as current. Protect sensitive records and lawful reporting. The founder's unique lifetime office remains governed by the Constitution, with no exemption from safety or civil duties.

Adoption

Approved by _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Effective date _____ Credential register custodian _____ Record _____