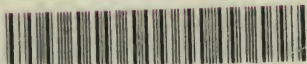


Presbyterian church in Canada.
Draft of a form of process...

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OF A FORM OF PROCESS

ANENT THE

CALLING AND SETTLING OF MINISTERS IN CONGREGATIONS, &c.

EXTRACTS FROM MINUTES OF SYNOD.

Extract Minute of Synod, 19th July, 1853.

“The Synod called for the Draft of the Form of Procedure in the Calling and Settling of Ministers; and, having considered the same, adopted it as an Interim Act for one year, and instructed Presbyteries to send up their opinions thereon to the next meeting of Synod.”

Whereas, it is highly expedient that the form of Process in the Calling and Induction of Ministers, into the Congregations of this Church, should be clearly defined, both for the preventing confusion in said congregations, and securing uniformity in the manner of procedure throughout the Church;—Be it therefore enacted, &c., &c., &c.

1. That no Congregation shall be received as a Congregation of this Church, and entitled to have a Minister set over them in Holy Things by any Presbytery of this Church, until, through means of Elders, Trustees or other adhering Members, duly authorised thereunto, they shall have first solemnly declared their willingness to adhere to the faith, government, worship, and discipline of this Church; and, in all cases, submitting to the jurisdiction thereof,—which said declaration shall be subscribed and presented to the Presbytery; and, farther, said Congregation shall satisfy the Presbytery of the bounds, of the security of church property by good and sufficient title to the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland. The said Declaration shall be of the following tenor:—

UNTO THE REVEREND THE PRESBYTERY OF

THE MEMORIAL OF US, THE UNDERSIGNED,

Humbly Sheweth,—

That we, your Memorialists, residing in _____ County of _____ and neighbourhood, Members and adherents of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland, desirous of being formed and received as a Congregation within the bounds of your Reverend Presbytery, crave to be so received, as we, by these presents, declare our willingness to adhere to the faith, government, worship, and discipline of the above said church, and to submit in all matters affecting our interests, as a congregation, to the jurisdiction of the Courts of the said Presbyterian Church of Canada, in connection with the Church of Scotland. In Witness Whereof, &c., &c.

II. That no Minister or Probationer shall be eligible to become the Pastor of any Congregation within the bounds of this church, until he has been received as a Minister or Probationer by one of the Presbyteries thereof, and taken the oath of allegiance.

III. That no Minister or Probationer shall be admitted a Minister of a Congregation by any Presbytery without his having been called

thereunto by said Congregation, or by such a part thereof as the Presbytery shall, in its judgment, consider to be such a good and sufficient Call as to warrant his admission as Minister of said Congregation.

IV. That no Call shall be moderated in favour of any Minister or Probationer, unless he shall have preached to said Congregation.

V. That no Minister or Probationer is to receive any call to a vacant congregation, but through the hands of the Presbytery of the bounds; for it is by their determination that the Calling, as well as the Induction of a Minister, is to be ordered and concluded.

VI. That, when in consequence of a vacancy occurring in any Congregation, or any Congregation newly formed, requiring a Minister, application shall first be made to the Presbytery, on the part of the Elders, Trustees, or Managers, or any part of them, of the said Congregation, requesting the Presbytery to moderate in a Call in favour of some fit person, having already preached to said congregation. Whereupon the Presbytery shall appoint some convenient day, not less than ten days after, (notice whereof shall be given in the most practicable way to the parties concerned), for meeting for said purpose, or the Presbytery may appoint one of its Members to act in the matter, in the event of not meeting as a Court.

VII. On the day appointed for moderating in the Call, the Minister officiating, by order of the Presbytery, having ended sermon and dismissed the congregation, shall call on the Elders, and Heads of families, being communicants, (or, in case of a new congregation of the Heads of families solemnly declaring their adherence to the church), to remain as parties concerned, and, after prayer, shall request these present to Call, by subscribing a form thereof, some fit and qualified person to be their Pastor. The form of which shall be as follows:—

VIII. We, the Elders and male Heads of Families, being Members of the Congregation and Communicants in the Church of _____, desirous of promoting the Glory of God, and the good of the Church, being destitute of a fixed pastor, and being most assured, by good information and our own experience, of the ministerial abilities and prudence, and also the suitableness to our capacities, of the gifts of you _____, Preacher of the Gospel, have agreed to Invite, Call, and Entreat, like as we, by these presents, do hereby Invite, Call, and Entreat you to undertake the office of Pastor among us, and the charge of our souls; and, farther, upon your accepting this, our Call, promise you all dutiful respect, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord. In Witness, whereof, &c., &c.

(OR WHERE A NEW CONGREGATION IS FORMED.)

We, the subscribed, declaring ourselves to be adherents and supporters of the Gospel, of the Congregation of _____, desirous of promoting, &c., &c.

IX. After the Call has been subscribed the Moderator shall attest on the Call, that agreeably to the appointment of Presbytery he did moderate at the meeting of electors of the Congregation of _____ the majority, or all, or any part thereof present, made choice of _____ to be their pastor at such time and place

X. That when the Call has been subscribed, the Presbytery may

then, or shall at its next meeting afterwards, judge as to said Call being sustained, when, if it should appear to them that the said Call has not been subscribed by such a number of Heads of Families, in full communion, as to warrant them, without damage to the Congregation to proceed, the said Call shall be rejected. But if said Call be sustained as good and sufficient, the Presbytery shall then, through the Moderator, present the said Call to the Minister or Probationer, in whose favour it was given, and obtain from him an answer, whether he accepts, and closes with said call, when, if an affirmative reply is given, he shall, if a Probationer, be immediately put on trials for Ordination.

XI. That along with the Call and before adjudging thereon, there be required to be afforded to the Presbytery, on the part of the Congregation, a good and sufficient guarantee of at least a *minimum* annual payment or stipend, for the support of said person Called, during the whole period of his lifetime or incumbency, which said guarantee shall be to such an amount as the Presbytery shall judge to be sufficient for the support of the Minister, and, at the same time, according to the accredited ability of the Congregation.

XII. That the person Called, if a Probationer, shall, after these previous steps being taken by the Presbytery, submit himself to the Presbytery to undergo trials previous to Ordination, all which trials shall be of the same order as when receiving license, viz: a Homily, a Lecture, an Exercise and Additions on some part of the Greek New Testament, an Exegesis in Latin, on some controverted point in Divinity, and a popular sermon. He shall be examined also on his knowledge of the Greek of the New Testament, the Hebrew of the Old Testament, and on his acquaintanceship with Church History and Divinity. All which trials being undergone and sustained, the Presbytery shall then appoint some day, other than the day on which said trials have been received, for the Ordination and Induction of said Probationer, as Minister of said Congregation, in which case notice shall be given by proclamation to the Congregation, or affixing the same to the church door, or other most public place of resort, an Edict of the following tenor.

XIII. The Presbytery of _____ having sustained the trials of _____
 Called to be Minister of the Congregation of _____
 and having resolved to proceed with the Ordination of the said _____
 to the pastoral charge of the said Congregation,
 according to the rules of the Church, Notice is hereby given, to all concerned, especially the members of the Congregation, that if any of them have any thing to object to the life and doctrine of the said _____ they may repair to the Presbytery, which is to meet in _____ on _____ the _____ day of _____ at _____ o'clock. wth certification that if no person offer any relevant objection, the Presbytery shall then forthwith proceed to the Ordination of the said _____ to the office of the Holy Ministry, and admit him to the pastoral charge of the said Congregation of _____

XIV. Although by use and wont, it has been the practice of the Church of Scotland to allow ten free days to intervene between the serving of the Edict and the day of Meeting for Ordination, the Presbytery, if they see meet, may dispense with this practice, as the person to be Ordained is to be admitted a Member of the Church, upon the Call of the Congregation, and not as in Scotland, upon any crown or laick

presentation, in which case it is presumed that the Congregation shall have previously taken care to obtain sufficient knowledge of the character and principles of the person called by them.

XV. The Presbytery having met according to appointment, proclamation shall be made at the church door, three several times, that if any person has any objection to offer against the life, doctrine or conversation of Mr. A. B. being Ordained to the office of the Holy Ministry, and Inducted as Minister of this Congregation, the said person shall immediately repair to the Presbytery, and lodge certification, with proof why the said A. B. should not be ordained. If notice be given to the Presbytery that no one objected, the Presbytery should then proceed in the proper and more solemn work of the day.

XVI. After public worship being dispensed by the Minister appointed to officiate on the occasion, who shall preach on some suitable portion of Scripture, applicable to the qualifications of Ministers, and the reciprocal duties betwixt them and their people, the said Minister officiating shall, from the pulpit, shew to the congregation assembled the occasion of the day's meeting, and all the steps of the Presbytery's proceeding hitherto with respect to that affair.

XVII. Then the Minister presiding shall call on the Intransigent, who, in the face and audience of the Congregation, is to answer the following questions:—

1.—Do you believe the Scripture of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only rule of faith and manners?

2.—Do you sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith, approved by the General Assemblies of the Church of Scotland, and ratified by law in the year 1690, to be founded upon the Word of God, and do you acknowledge the same, as the confession of your faith; and will you firmly and constantly adhere thereto, and to the utmost of your power assert, maintain, and defend the same, and the purity of Worship as presently practised in this Church, and asserted in Act xv. Assembly 1707, entitled “Act against innovation in the Worship of God?”

3.—Do you disown all Popish, Arian, Socinian, Arminian, Bourignian, and other doctrines, tenets, and opinions, whatsoever, contrary to and inconsistent with the foresaid Confession of Faith?

4.—Are you persuaded that the Presbyterian government and discipline of this Church, are founded upon the word of God, and agreeable thereto; and do you promise to submit to the said government and discipline, and to concur with the same, and never to endeavour, directly, or indirectly, the prejudice or subversion thereof, but, to the utmost of your power, in your station, to maintain, support and defend, the said discipline and Presbyterian government, by Kirk Sessions, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies, during all the days of your life?

5.—Do you promise to submit yourself willingly and humbly, in the spirit of meekness, unto the admonitions of the brethren of this Presbytery, and to be subject to them and all other Presbyteries and superior judicatories of the Church, where God in his Providence shall cast your lot; and that, according to your power, you shall maintain the unity

and peace of this Church, against error and schism, notwithstanding of whatsoever trouble or persecution may arise, and that you shall follow no divisive courses from the present established doctrine, worship, discipline and government of this church ?

6.—Are not zeal for the honour of God, love to Jesus Christ, and desire of saving souls, your great motives and chief inducements to enter into the functions of the holy ministry, and not worldly designs and interest ?

7.—Have you used any undue methods, either by yourself or others, in procuring this call ?

8.—Do you engage in the strength and grace of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Master, to rule well your own family, to live a holy and circumspect life, and faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully to discharge all the parts of the Ministerial work, to the edification of the body of Christ ?

9.—Do you accept of and Close with the Call to be Pastor of this Congregation, and promise, through grace, to perform all the duties of a faithful Minister of the Gospel among this people ?

According to the standing rule of this Church the following Act requires to be read over and assented to by the Intrans :—

WHEREAS, this Synod has always, from its first establishment, possessed a free and supreme jurisdiction, over all the congregations and ministers in connection therewith ; and although the independence and freedom of this Synod, in regard to all things spiritual, cannot be called in question, but has been repeatedly and in most explicit terms affirmed, not only by itself, but by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, yet as in present circumstances it is expedient that this independence be asserted and declared by a special act :—

It is, therefore, hereby declared, That this Synod had always claimed and possessed, does now possess, and ought always, in all time coming, to have and exercise a perfectly free, full, final, supreme and uncontrolled power of jurisdiction, discipline and government, in regard to all matters ecclesiastical and spiritual, over all the ministers, elders, church members and congregations under its care, without the right of review, appeal, complaint or reference by or to any other Court or Courts whatsoever, in any form or under any pretence ; and that in all cases that may come before it for judgment, the decisions and deliverance of this Synod shall be final. And this Synod further declares, that if any encroachment on this supreme power and authority shall be attempted or threatened, by any person or persons, Court or Courts whatsoever, then this Synod, and each and every member thereof, shall, to the utmost of their power, resist and oppose the same. And whereas, the words in the designation of the Synod, “ In connection with the Church of Scotland,” have been misunderstood or misrepresented by many persons, it is hereby declared, that the said words imply no right of jurisdiction or control, in any form whatever, by the Church of Scotland over this Synod, but denote merely the connection of origin, identity of standards, and ministerial and church communion.

XVII. In the most conspicuous place in the church, and near to the pulpit, a table and seats being placed where the brethren of the Presbytery and Elders of the congregation are to sit, together with the In-

trant, so that all the Ministers may conveniently give him imposition of hands, and the others may take him by the hand, when thereunto called—the minister is to come from the pulpit to the foresaid place, where the Intrans kneeling and the brethren standing, he, as their mouth, in their Master's name and authority, shall, in and by prayer, set the candidate apart, (not only the minister who prays but all the brethren that conveniently can, laying their hands upon his head,) to the office of the ministry, invoking God for his blessing.

XIX. The prayer being ended, the Minister who moderates in the action shall take the person ordained by the right hand, and say unto him, "We give unto you the right hand of fellowship, to take part of the ministry with us,"—and thereafter all the ministers of the Presbytery. The minister officiating shall then return to the pulpit and suitably exhort both minister and people, and conclude the worship of God by Singing and the Apostolic Blessing.

XX. The Presbytery shall then require the Intrans to subscribe the usual Formula, also Bonds in Duplicate, in behalf of the Ministers' Widows' and Orphans' Fund, whereupon his name shall be added to the roll of the Presbytery.

The Formula is as follows :—

I, _____ do hereby declare that I do sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine contained in the Confession of Faith, approved by the General Assemblies of the National Church of Scotland, and ratified by law in the year 1690, and frequently confirmed by divers acts of Parliament, since that time, to be the truths of God ; and I do own the same as the confession of my faith ; as likewise I do own the purity of worship, presently authorised and practiced in this church, and also the Presbyterian government and discipline, now established therein, which doctrine, worship and church government, I am persuaded are founded upon the Word of God, and agreeable thereto ; and I promise that, through the Grace of God, I shall firmly and constantly adhere to the same ; and, to the utmost of my power, shall, in my station, assert, maintain and defend the said doctrine, worship, discipline and government of this church, by Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, Provincial Synods, and General Assemblies ; and that I shall, in my practice, conform myself to the said worship, and to submit to the said discipline and government, and never endeavour directly or indirectly the prejudice or subversion of the same ; and I promise that I shall follow no divisive course from the present establishment in this church, renouncing all doctrines, tenets, and opinions whatsoever, contrary to or inconsistent with the said doctrine, worship, discipline or government of this church.

TRANSLATION OF MINISTERS.

I. In the event of an ordained minister having a pastoral charge, and accredited as a regular constituent member of this Synod, being called from his present charge by any other congregation to be their minister, the same rules regarding Probationers shall be followed, viz : that he shall have previously preached to the congregation calling him, that the Call shall be moderated in by the Presbytery, within whose bounds the congregation calling him lies, and, through the Moderator, presented to him.

II. If the Minister called be a member of another Presbytery, then the Presbytery within whose bounds the congregation calling lies, shall communicate, by letter or commissioners, with the Presbytery within whose bounds the minister called resides,—lay before it the Call, their own proceedings thereon, the grounds for transportation and craving deliverance on the subject of said Call, in the matter of acceptance thereof, and concurrence in his transportation.

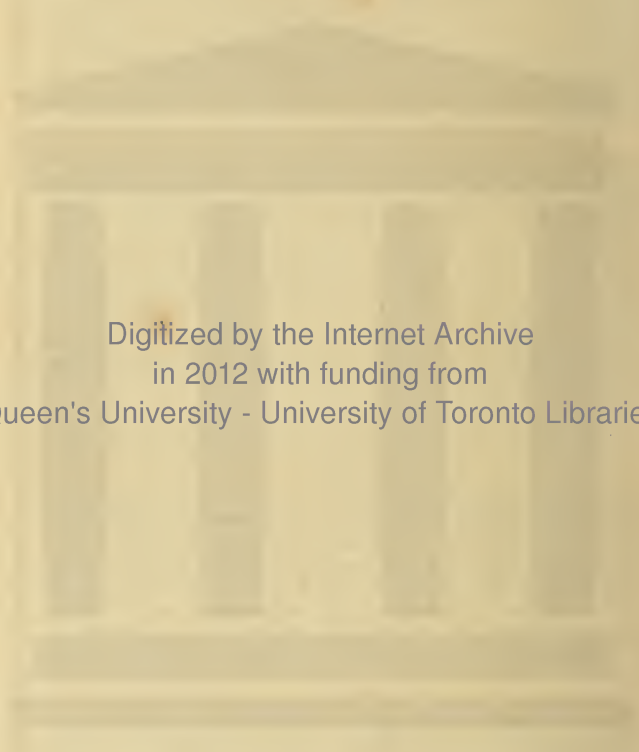
III. Before any Presbytery shall be empowered to concur in sustaining a Call from any congregation in favour of a minister having a pastoral charge, it shall be required that notice shall have been given to the congregation of which the person called is minister, at least *ten* days before the meeting of Presbytery, for adjudicating on the case, that said congregation may have opportunity of objecting and showing to the Presbytery, satisfactory reasons why the said minister should not be loosed from his present charge.

IV. If no sufficient objections are made to the transportation of the minister called, the Presbytery shall accordingly concur in releasing him, from the day of his admission as minister of the congregation calling him, and shall appoint him to wait for and obey the orders of the Presbytery within whose bounds he is to be transported, as to the time of his Induction to his new charge. Extracts of these proceedings shall be forthwith sent to the Presbytery where the vacant congregation lies, by whom the necessary steps for Induction shall be taken, the forms of which shall be, in all respects, the same as in the Ordination of Probationers, excepting there is no re-imposition of hands, nor any trials, as in the case of Probationers, required.

CONGREGATIONS APPLYING TO OTHER CHURCHES FOR MINISTERS.

I. That in the event of any Congregation of this Church applying, through means of their Elders, Trustees, or Committee, appointed for that purpose, for a Probationer or Minister, being sent them from any other church in communion with this church, the said application shall first be presented to the Presbytery of the bounds where the vacant congregation lies, by which Presbytery the same shall be adjudged, homologated, and transmitted to the proper quarter,—parties being allowed to be heard in case of a difference amongst the members of the congregation.

II. On the arrival of said Probationer or Minister, the nomination of whom by said other church in communion with this church, proceeding upon the faith of said congregation, having determined and pledged themselves to adhere to the choice made for them, no new Call shall be necessary, but, previous to his becoming a member of the Presbytery or of the Synod of this church, he shall be required to be Inducted by the Presbytery of the bounds, as Minister of the said Congregation, according to the rules for the Ordination and Induction of Ministers.



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