
HOW DOES FELLOWSHIP ATLANTIC AFFIRM A PREVIOUS ORDINATION?

A. Affirmation of Ordination Council

If a member church of Fellowship Atlantic has called a pastor who has been ordained in a church outside of the Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists, the Regional Director and Executive will work with that church so that this ordination can be recognized and affirmed by our association.

The church names a point person to organize the event from a local church level. That person should contact the Regional Director (or Regional Council President) to ask that an Affirmation of Ordination Council be organized, for the purpose of interviewing and affirming the Pastor's ordination. This council will be comprised of a Fellowship Atlantic Moderator, agreed upon by the Regional Director and church, as well as several Fellowship Atlantic pastors who have been invited to attend and participate. Together, the Regional Director and the church will determine a suitable date for this Council and invitations will be extended for pastors to participate.

Prior to the meeting, the Candidate must supply to the Council a written document stating his:

- Conversion - Spiritual Life/Growth - Calling and Philosophy of Ministry - Doctrinal Statement

This does not need to be an exhaustive document, but it should adequately summarize the candidate's growth in Christ, doctrinal beliefs, and ministry experience.

Upon request for the formation of this Affirmation of Ordination Council and before the date of interview, the church and pastor will also receive a package containing various documents to help acquaint the candidate with Fellowship Atlantic: *Affirmation of Ordination, By-Laws + Affirmation of Faith, Credentialing Pastors for Weddings, Introduction to Fellowship Atlantic, Code of Ethics, Value and Expectation of Association, FA Church Directory.*

B. Procedure for Affirmation of Ordination

The Interview will be conducted by the Moderator and the invited Fellowship pastors in the presence of any church people who have assembled. The interview will consist of the pastor summarizing his four statements, followed by clarifying questions about the candidate's statements and his understanding of the mission and values of Fellowship Atlantic.

Other questions about may be asked regarding anything in the candidate's past that may harm his ministry. (e.g., "Is there anything in your past, particularly of a sexual or criminal nature that, if revealed, might disqualify or greatly hinder you for the ministry?")

Some basic guidelines regarding this process:

1. Clarifying questions are not meant to be a means by which the Council tries to convince the candidate of a different position but are meant to be a means by which the Council hears and confirms clear biblical knowledge and application.
2. The Council will not go through the candidate's documents line by line since they have had an opportunity to review them beforehand. Rather, they will be looking for clarification of positions, for doctrinal orthodoxy, for honest progressive sanctification in the candidate's life, and for clear biblical reasoning where there are differences in thought or practice.
3. This affirmation is intended to be much more casual than a formal ordination council for a pastor. It is hoped that the time will flow as in a conversation as we get to know the candidate's heart for ministry, the church and doctrine. The format is meant to hold a spirit of affirmation and cooperation.
4. Following the Interview, this council will meet to discuss the interview and make its recommendation to the church. They will inform the church leadership, who will organize any church affirmation service or fellowship to follow.

C. Format for Council

The Moderator of the Affirmation of Ordination Council – Regional Director, Council President, or Association pastor – will call the meeting to order.

1. Introductory comments from Moderator or others, describing the purpose of the meeting, the church's reasons for requesting the Council, and procedure to be followed
2. A time of Prayer, preparing our hearts and asking for wisdom and spiritual insight.
3. A review of the candidate:
 - a) Conversion and Call - clarifying questions
 - b) Spiritual Life/Growth - clarifying questions
 - c) Call to ministry and Philosophy of Ministry - clarifying questions
 - d) Doctrinal Statement - clarifying questions
 - e) Fellowship Atlantic documents – understanding of mission and values
4. Private discussions - candidate and church are asked to step out during deliberations.
5. Candidate affirmation by the council, including any encouragements and exhortations
6. A response by the church with further congregational affirmation
7. An opportunity for the church to schedule an Induction Service or similar.