



BWIM | MONTH OF ADV[♀]CACY

Further Resources on Ways to Advocate

- **Advocate for the ordination of women in your church**

Two factors typically work against women being ordained in Baptist congregations.

First, theological or biblical arguments against the ordination of women to both the diaconate and the gospel ministry are still prevalent in Baptist congregations. Below, you can find a few resources on why women's ordination is biblical and theologically sound:

- [A Baptist Reflection on Women in Ministry and Leadership](#), a short booklet by Meredith Stone
- [Gender Roles and the People of God: Rethinking What We Were Taught about Men and Women in the Church](#) by Alice Matthews
- [Discovering Biblical Equality: Biblical, Theological, Cultural, and Practical Perspectives](#), edited by Ronald W. Pierce, Cynthia Long Westfall, and Christa L. McKirland
- Many other articles and books in relation this question as well, these are just a place to start.

Second, because Baptist congregations do not have a universal method by which ordination is sought, requested, or obtained, even in churches where the ordination of women is allowed, women face obstacles to becoming ordained. These hurdles include assumptions about the process, a lack of clarity around the process of seeking ordination, and understanding the meaning of ordination.

Most congregants assume that if someone needs to be ordained then someone else, like church leadership, will take the first steps. Additionally, church leadership assumes that if a woman would like to seek ordination then she will ask. However, the cumulative effects of being a woman in a male-dominated leadership space mean that women are less likely to ask for this type of affirmation, because of the rejection they have experienced, and leaders are less likely to take

action to start the process on their behalf. Therefore, advocacy for those steps to be taken is necessary.

Further, women have often been told that they do not need ordination to minister, they should just continue their service seeking only affirmation from God. While it is true that ordination is not required to minister, because ordination is a part of the process of the church's affirmation of what God has done in a person's life, and men are not given the same exhortation to not seek ordination as often, the underlying message is that women are not worthy of being ordained. Women should not be derided for seeking the same affirmation that is freely given to male leaders. Ordination is a process that has been created so that God's call can be affirmed by the church, not as a status symbol or badge of honor. Women need that affirmation in the same way as men, if not more so since their leadership has been rejected for 2,000 years.

Your advocacy for the ordination of women in your church might include:

- Starting the conversation about why ordaining women is biblically and theologically sound (if women are not ordained in your congregation)
- Advocating for a clear ordination process for any ordination candidate
- Making a formal recommendation to the appropriate church leader or committee for a specific woman to enter the ordination process