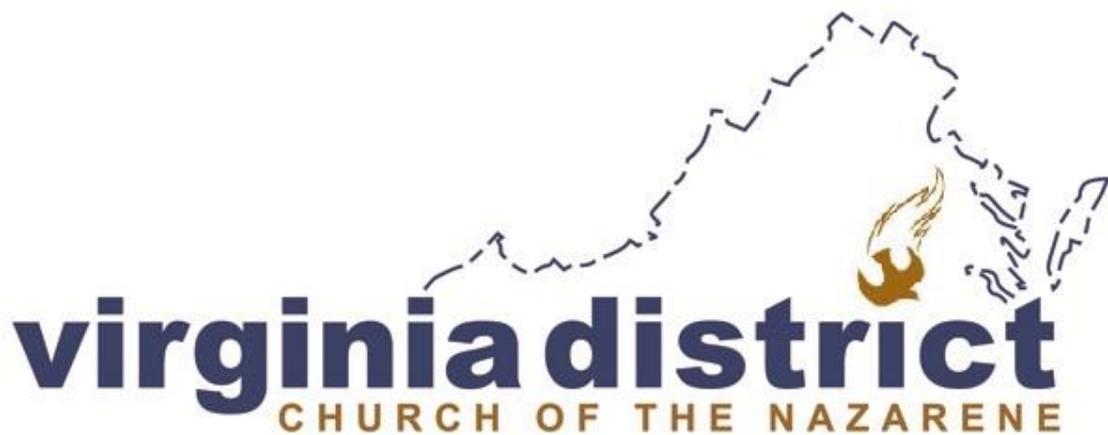


A Handbook for Candidates Seeking Ordination



Revised November 2018

Welcome

Greetings in the hope-giving name of Jesus Christ!

“God will not lead you where His grace will not keep you.”

For more than two decades of ministry I give testimony to a God who keeps His promise. He never leaves us. He does not abandon us. His promise to be with us is always true.

You have picked up this handbook and are reading through it because you are exploring or recognizing the call of God on your life for a special kind of ministry. A call to ministry is also a call to preparation for ministry. I thank God for a great team of people on both our Ministerial Studies and Ministerial Credentials Boards who are dedicated to helping you prepare for ministry and to point you toward ordination. You have probably heard this before, but the saying is immensely true – “God does not call the qualified, He qualifies the called.” In calling you to the ministry, He is not really asking so much for your abilities, but rather for your availability to Him.

Ordination is a joyous privilege – recognition by the church of your **calling** by God, your Christlike **character**, your **competencies** for ministry, your **clarity** in understanding and articulating the doctrines of the church, and your **continuity** in credentialing and ministry. This handbook helpfully points you towards your ordination.

Special thanks go to Rev. Bill Dillon for preparing this helpful handbook for your use. The district family stands ready to assist you as you progress in these steps for God and His church.

Let’s enjoy this journey together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Phillip Fuller". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Phil Fuller, District Superintendent Chairman:
Ministerial Credentials Board Virginia District
Church of the Nazarene Office: 804.739.4884 or Email: phillip@vanaz.org

Welcome to the Journey

This *Handbook for Christian Ministries* is designed to guide you through the journey of preparing for ministry. Preparation for ministry is a lifetime process because ministry is a lifetime commitment. We hope this *Handbook* will serve as a resource to answer your questions about your journey.

Looking Ahead

Everyone's journey is different, but everyone also encounters a certain number of shared experiences. This introduction will describe the main steps along the journey you will share with others in vocational ministry. This overview of the journey should help orient you for what lies ahead.

STAGE ONE: The Call

The journey into vocational ministry can be described in four main stages. Each stage possesses milestones that mark progress within that stage. You are now embarking on the first stage, **the Call**. For some people this part of the journey is the most difficult. They wrestle with the question of whether or not the challenges during this stage (beginning college, working to support yourself, entering into marriage, parenting a family, leaving a previous career, preparing for retirement, etc.) are worthwhile, causing them to reevaluate their call. All this and more is a normal part of Stage One.

As you begin your journey, you may have a tendency to be overwhelmed with questions and possibilities. Please look for opportunities to talk with your pastor, mentor, or professor about both your enthusiasm for obeying God's call to ministry and your uncertainties about how all the details will work out. These individuals have been down similar paths and will be glad to listen to you and offer a few pointers along the way.

STAGE TWO: Educational Preparation

To be an effective minister, you need to have an understanding of the Bible, the Church, Christian theology, and much more. The Church of the Nazarene has always been committed to educating those called to ministry. The church has provided several paths by which you may achieve an adequate education to prepare you for ministry.

These paths will be explained in detail later in this *Handbook*. The educational portion of the journey will occupy several years of your life. You will want to consider carefully which path best fits your needs and plans for future ministry. Even though you will want to learn and grow throughout your ministry, the normal expectation is for concentrated study early in your ministry preparation. This study will provide basic understandings and skills and will set the stage for your lifelong learning process.

STAGE THREE: The Road to Ordination

As you are completing your educational preparation, you will find God's leading into a specific ministry experience. You will be glad to know that many resources are available to help you find a ministry assignment that best fits your skills and interests. Once you get settled into that exciting and stretching first ministry role, you will begin to grow in your ability to do ministry while others mentor and evaluate you. The culminating milestone for this third stage is ordination.

STAGE FOUR: Lifelong Learning

Everyone moves through a series of changes in the course of a lifetime in ministry. The combination of changes in society, technology, ministry assignments, and personal development means that a minister is constantly in need of more preparation for the ministry assignment in which he or she serves. Often that preparation is informal, but the Church of the Nazarene also asks its ministers to provide accountability for lifelong learning through a more formal process of continuing education.

These four stages describe the major periods of your lifetime of ministry preparation. Sometimes the stages will overlap in time. For example, many people are still sorting out the details of their call (Stage One) while they are involved in their educational preparation (Stage Two). Some people overlap their preparation (Stage

Two) with their ministry experience that leads toward ordination (Stage Three). Do not worry too much about stages three and four at the beginning. You need not occupy yourself too much with Stage 3 and 4 at this point; instead, focus on the first steps in the process as you continue to process your call and begin your educational preparation.

However, you do need to know that the high calling of ordained ministry will be a journey full of excitement, expectations, and development throughout your life. Once again, welcome to the journey. Enjoy each new step as God unfolds it before you!

STAGE FIVE: Credentialing Process

The credentials process includes annual accountability with both the Ministerial Studies and Ministerial Credential boards. You can find the information on how to apply for and schedule meetings for your annual Ministerial Studies review, first time Ministerial licenses, annual renewal of minister's license, and application for interview recommending ordination.

[Click Here](#) to review the English Credentials section of the web site

[Click Here](#) to review the Spanish Section of the Credentials web site

CHAPTER ONE The Call

to Ministry

What is the call to ministry?

God calls every Christian to full-time ministry.

The Church of the Nazarene believes all Christians are called to minister. God's call to ministry is not limited to a few saintly Christians who are deeply committed to pray, sacrifice, and serve while others live "normal" lives in a secular society. Whatever vocation God calls you to – carpenter, doctor, farmer, teacher, missionary, or homemaker – becomes the arena for your mission. While not everyone will earn a living through full-time ministry, every Christian must choose a vocation and carry out ministry as God directs. Everything you do must be for His glory. God expects full-time Christian service from you.

God's call comes to people in different ways.

Biblical accounts of God's call vary greatly. It would be so much easier if God would speak His will in a clear, audible voice or send an engraved invitation. It would require less faith if He called us all in the same predictable way. Instead, He expects us to be sensitive and obedient to His direction as He leads us step by step.

God equips us and helps us fulfill His call.

God is the source of the gifts and graces that equip us to fulfill His call. Your call will take advantage of your strengths – an important indication of God's will for you. You may not be aware of those qualities and abilities before He calls you. The advice and help of other Christians will guide and affirm you as you seek to develop and to use your God-given potential for Him.

God calls some Christians to specific kinds of ministry.

Some Christians will be called to specific ministries, such as pastor, missionary, Christian education, or other ministries, in response and obedience to the call of God. These callings carry with them such responsibility that the church provides special educational preparation for them. Approval to serve in these areas includes careful examination and nurture before endorsement is given, credentials are granted, and appointments are made.

God calls us through other Christians.

Fellow Christians have an important role in confirming or correcting your perception of God's call. Because everyone will not understand your response to God's call, you should prayerfully listen to fellow believers who encourage or question your pursuit of a particular ministry. God may be speaking through them. If you need more direct, personal help, contact your pastor.

To what types of ministry might God be calling me?

The traditional type of ministry to which God calls men and women is preaching ministry. You recognize these men and women as those who lead congregations of believers serving as evangelists, missionaries, or planting new churches.

However, in our changing world many are recognizing God's call to minister in a variety of different capacities. One type of minister directs works of compassion and relief for people suffering from hunger, homelessness, sickness, addiction, economic hardship, and disaster. Other ministers serve as chaplains in the armed services, hospitals, prisons and retirement centers, and with police officers and firefighters.

God may be calling you as a staff pastor to a specific age group of the church like children or youth - and their families, or senior adults. You may have special talents in outreach evangelism, church administration, or music that God will use to build His church.

Some men and women are called to bi-vocational ministry. These ministers hold significant employment outside the church to maintain community contacts and provide financial support for their families while they also serve as congregational leaders.

What is ordained ministry?

Ordination is the authenticating, authorizing act of the church that recognizes and confirms God's call to ministerial leadership as stewards and proclaimers of both the gospel and the church of Jesus Christ.

It is important to realize that God calls but the church ordains. The church does not claim the right to call people to the ministry. That is the work of God the Holy Spirit.

Ordination is an authorizing act of the church. By means of ordination the church officially approves you as a minister. The ordination service itself bears witness to the church universal and to the world at large that you are truly a man or woman of God, that you have the gifts and graces for public ministry, that you have a thirst for knowledge, especially for the Word of God, and that you can clearly communicate the sound doctrine of the gospel.

Ordination is also a confirming act of the church. But before the public service of ordination, the church is at work evaluating you and your potential for ministry. The local church and the District Ministerial Credentials Board will observe you closely to determine if they will recommend you to the District Assembly for ordination.

Ordination is a spiritual and theological act of the church. It is more than receiving a certification to minister. It is more than passing qualifying exams of your profession. It is the church's acknowledgement that God calls and gifts certain men and women for ministerial leadership in the church. Because scripture teaches that in Christ there is neither slave nor free, Jew nor Greek, male nor female, but all are one in Christ, the Church of the Nazarene ordains persons regardless of their economic status, nationality, race, or gender. The issue in ordination is the testimony of a call from God, completing minimum educational preparation for and experience in ministry, and the demonstration in the life of the church of the gifts and graces for ministerial leadership.

What are elders and deacons?

In the Church of the Nazarene two categories of ordination are recognized – elder and deacon. Elders are ministers called of God to full-time preaching ministry. The order of deacon is reserved for those with a call to a lifetime of ministry. Deacons may preach from time to time but are not called to a full-time preaching ministry.

The following descriptions are not exhaustive. God may be calling you to these or other types of ministry:

Pastoral Ministry: proclaiming the Word of God, teaching, counseling, and creating centers of compassion as an administrator, friend, guide, and co-laborer within a community of believers

Children and Youth Ministry: shaping tomorrow's world by helping children and teens make the right choices, in an era full of dissolving families and relaxed moral attitudes

College Campus Ministry: guiding students from secular and denominational schools through the big decisions of life directly affecting their entire future

Compassionate Ministry: addressing some of society's most critical problems: hunger, homelessness, unemployment, at-risk children and youth, and AIDS, through Compassionate Ministry Centers, Good Samaritan Churches, and Nazarene Disaster Response

Chaplaincy: serving others through the role of chaplain in corporate businesses, the armed forces, jails, prisons, hospitals, and other institutions

Christian Counseling: providing competent guidance to those struggling with stress and instability to the point of complete physical, mental, and/or spiritual collapse

Christian Education: planning, organizing, and administering an effective local church education ministry; writing, planning, and organizing denominational education programs; teaching and administering at various colleges and seminaries around the world

Communications: creative minds and skilled hands transforming sophisticated hardware into meaningful tools for ministry and communicating the gospel locally and globally

Evangelism: spontaneous birthing of spiritual movements that extend the Kingdom of God; starting new churches as the most effective means of evangelism today; personally sharing the life-changing message of Christ with an unsaved friend

Missions: representing the Church of the Nazarene in world areas, in assignments ranging from medicine, education, and agriculture to pastoral ministry and administration

Multi-site Ministry: serving as a campus pastor, venue pastor or ministry director in a multi-site ministry of a local church; providing oversight and ministry leadership for an offsite campus including spiritual formation and mission mobilization.

Do I need to be ordained?

Ordination is not required for ministry in the Church of the Nazarene, although all ministers must complete the educational requirements of the course of study to receive a district ministerial license. However, a district ministerial license is required to serve as a pastor in the Church of the Nazarene.

CHAPTER TWO Educational

Preparation

The Church of the Nazarene believes a call to the ministry is also a call to prepare. A significant part of the preparation is education. This led our church from the beginning to establish institutions and systems of education. Education for ministry in the Church of the Nazarene includes both general and theological education. General education fosters a growing understanding of the historical and current context in which the minister is called to serve. Theological education is an essential part of spiritual development and character formation. It also makes accessible to the individual the rich resources of the Christian faith, enabling the minister to serve humankind and meet societal needs redemptively.

Desired Goals of Educational Preparation

(See also the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene)

Education for service will assist the minister in the process of “being,” “knowing,” and “doing”. Educational preparation for ordination enables an ordinand to begin ministry. Lifelong learning is required of every licensed minister (Manual 527.6). The following educational goals are the desired results of the four curricular elements of ministerial preparation.

For the minister “**to be**”, the desired outcomes are expressed in:

1. loving God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength and the neighbor as oneself as expressed in Christian holiness
2. spirituality with an abiding sense of God’s call
3. existence as a person in relationship to the community of faith
4. unquestioned integrity and honor
5. compassion, patience and perseverance
6. self-discipline and self-control
7. humility, gentleness and sensitivity to others
8. passion and courage
9. wisdom and discernment
10. vision and commitment

For the minister “**to know**”, the desired outcomes are to have:

1. a knowledge of the Holy Scripture and methods of interpretation
2. an understanding of Christian theology and especially the place of Christian holiness within it
3. a grasp of the history of the Christian church and her mission through the centuries
4. a knowledge of the Wesleyan theological heritage and traditions
5. a knowledge of the disciplines of the spiritual life
6. an understanding of the significance, forms, and place of Christian worship in the community of faith
7. an understanding of Christian personal and social ethics
8. a knowledge of communication theory and skills, especially preaching, and including teaching and interpersonal skills
9. an understanding of the dynamics of Christian servant leadership, local church administration, and models of mission and ministry; and the similarities to and distinctions from secular models of leadership and management
10. an awareness of the brokenness of the human condition, both personal and societal
11. an understanding of the dynamics of the human life, groups within the local church and society, including marriage and family
12. a grasp of the span of human history and culture, particularly of the minister’s own context
13. an awareness of cultural trends and influences in contemporary society including religious pluralism
14. a knowledge of the operation of the polity and practice of the Church of the Nazarene
15. an awareness of the legal framework in the society in which the congregation functions
16. an understanding of the purposes and processes for planting new churches

For the minister “**to do**”, desired outcomes are to:

1. **model** a godly life and vital piety
2. **think** prayerfully about personal, familial and congregational development
3. **act** with integrity and honor in all relationships
4. **respond** to others with the love of God
5. **lead** the people of God in worship, mission and service
6. **equip** the saints for the work of ministry
7. **preach** the Word of God with clarity in a culturally appropriate fashion
8. **teach** by word and example
9. **evangelize** the lost, feed the flock
10. **articulate** clearly the mission of the congregation and the Church
11. **minister** to the brokenness of persons and society
12. **communicate** the truth in love
13. **listen** with care and discretion
14. **facilitate** the ministry of all the people of God at the local level
15. **organize** the local congregation as needed and appropriate
16. **assess** the effectiveness of programs and plans
17. **acquire** skills in information technology and other media essential for ministry and mission
18. **pursue** lifelong learning
19. **participate** in leading or supporting new church planting within the context of the local congregation where the minister serves

Curricular Elements of Educational Preparation

There are four major elements of the educational preparation of ministers. Content represents the acquisition of the biblical, theological, and historical knowledge necessary for the minister. Competency involves the acquisition and development of skills for ministry. Character refers to the personal qualities of the minister, while context deals with the environment. These four elements must be embodied in each curriculum program leading to ordination.

Though curriculum is often thought of only as academic programs and course content, the concept is much larger. The character of the instructor, the relationship of the students and instructor, the environment, and students’ past experiences join with the course content to create the full curriculum. Nevertheless, a curriculum for ministerial preparation will include a minimal set of courses that provide educational foundations for ministry (*Manual* 527.3).

The Manual describes each of these four educational elements and their value to the educational preparation of the minister.

Content – Knowledge of the content of the Old and New Testaments, the theology of the Christian faith, and the history and mission of the Church is essential for ministry. Knowledge of how to interpret Scripture, the doctrine of holiness and our Wesleyan distinctive, and the history and polity of the Church of the Nazarene must be included in these courses.

Competency – Skills in oral and written communication; management in leadership; finance; and analytical thinking are also essential for ministry. In addition to general education in these areas courses providing skills in preaching, pastoral care and counseling, biblical exegesis, worship, effective evangelism, biblical stewardship of life resources, Christian education and church administration must be included. Graduation from a validated course of study requires the partnering of the educational provider and a local church to direct students in ministerial practices and competency development.

Character – Personal growth in character, ethics, spirituality, and personal and family relationship is vital for the ministry. Courses addressing the areas of Christian ethics, spiritual formation, human development, the person of the minister, and marriage and family dynamics must be included.

Context – The minister must understand both the historical and contemporary context and interpret the worldview and social environment of the culture where the Church witnesses. Courses that address the

concerns of anthropology and sociology, cross-cultural communication, missions, and social studies must be included (*Manual 527.3*).

Study Schemes for the Desired Outcomes

The ideal preparation for the pastoral ministry is a four-year liberal arts education at one of our Nazarene colleges or universities followed by three years of training at Nazarene Theological Seminary. For students who are not able to follow this path there are other options available to you. The Nazarene Bible College in Colorado Springs, Colorado specializes in training second career individuals for ministry. There are also distance-learning options available through some of our Nazarene colleges and universities. Finally, the Virginia District Training Center also offers a localized flexible option for completing required coursework, which can be taken for college credit conferred by Nazarene Bible College, or as a non-accredited training program. Either of these approaches are well-suited for students who need to stay in the Virginia area. Obtaining your education through a Nazarene institution of higher learning, or through the Virginia District Training Center are the preferred methods and are highly recommended and strongly encouraged.

CHAPTER THREE

Candidacy for Ordination or Certification

Local Minister

The official process leading toward ordination, whether elder or deacon, begins with the local minister's license. The local church board, upon request of the candidate and the recommendation of the pastor, grants this license. The board should evaluate thoughtfully and prayerfully the validity of the professed call of the applicant. Such evaluation should include the candidate's Christian experience, reputation, conduct, spiritual stability, doctrinal soundness, and the evidence of those gifts and graces that belong to such a high calling (*Manual* 531). The local church will also need to submit the Credential History Verification form to the VA District Resource center as part of the local license requirements set forth by the Church of the Nazarene. More details on the procedures for local licensing can also be found at <http://nazarene.org/licensing-and-ordination>.

Renewal of Local Minister's License

A local minister's license may be renewed annually upon recommendation of the pastor and the local church board and approved by the district superintendent. If a locally licensed minister is called to serve under a district assignment, he or she is reviewed and may be issued a license by the District Advisory Board upon recommendation of the district superintendent.

A local license cannot be renewed after two years if the candidate has not completed at least two subjects per year in a validated course of study without written approval from the district superintendent. (*Manual* 531.4).

Qualities of the Local Minister

The candidate who has secured a local minister's license must be involved in the ministry work of the local church under the direction of the pastor or a designated person. The local minister should be above reproach in all areas of conduct and demonstrate the gifts, graces, and usefulness that evidence the call. The local minister should be engaged in a validated course of study under the direction of the District Ministerial Studies Board (DMSB) formerly known as District Education Board (DEB). A local minister is subject to the privileges and restrictions of *Manual* 531.

District Licensed Minister

To qualify as a district-licensed minister, the candidate must have held a local minister's license for at least one full year and have completed one-fourth of a validated course of study for ministers (including History and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene). The following actions must be taken:

1. The candidate must have the local church board's recommendation to the district assembly, the proper recommendation form signed by the pastor, and filed with the district secretary in advance of the district assembly.
2. If the candidate is a convicted felon or has had a divorce(s), they must contact the District Ministerial Credentials Secretary and begin to work through the documents for possible barrier removal before applying for a District license (*Manual* 532). These documents need to be submitted to the Ministerial Credentials Secretary by February 28th. These candidates will then need to meet with the full DMCB when and where the board designates.
3. If there are no potential barriers, or the barriers have been previously removed, the candidate must then obtain the "Application for District Minister's License" and return the completed application at such time as prescribed.
4. The candidate must provide the DMSB with an up-to-date record of his or her studies.
5. The candidate must appear before the DMSB and District Ministerial Credentials Board (DMCB) when and where the Boards designate. No license can be given by the district assembly without the favorable report and formal recommendation of these boards.

Renewal of District License

The district minister's license is issued for one year. The candidate must not assume the district assembly will renew the license automatically (*Manual* 532.3). The DMSB will inform the district assembly of the academic progress of the candidate.

Ordination

Ordination is the confirmation by the church that the candidate demonstrates the gifts and graces that validate his or her call. Ordination is a privilege and not a right. This means the DMCB is not obligated to recommend ordination upon completion of the validated educational program and the minimal requirement of years of service. Election to ordination as elder or deacon is the prerogative of the district assembly. Election to the order of elder or deacon is by two-thirds vote.

The district-licensed ministerial candidate for ordination is expected to be thoroughly familiar with all *Manual* stipulations concerning ordination (*Manual* 532-534.3). The candidate for ordination must meet the requirements of the validated educational program, exhibit the appropriate gifts and graces, and be recognized and confirmed by the church.

The DMCB has the responsibility to assess the suitability of the candidate for ministry. The board shall personally and carefully examine the candidate on his or her fitness for ministry, spiritual and moral qualifications, financial integrity, and mental maturity. Only candidates who clearly exhibit these qualifications will be recommended for ordination.

Ordinands must participate in a public ordination service. The elders and deacons will lay hands on the candidates and the presiding general superintendent or designee will ordain them. In this way they will invest the ordinands with the authority of the ministerial office, charging them with its obligations and publicly presenting them with a certificate of ordination.

Recognition of Elder's Orders

Ordained ministers from other evangelical denominations desiring to transfer their ordination to the Church of the Nazarene must meet the requirements of *Manual* 535, as well as demonstrate appreciation, comprehension, and application of the *Manual*, doctrine of holiness, and the history of the Church of the Nazarene by successfully completing the related portions of a validated course of study.

CHAPTER FOUR

Specific Procedures for the Ordination Candidate on the Virginia District

STEP ONE: PURSUE A LOCAL LICENSE

Every candidate for ordination must be a member in good standing of a local Church of the Nazarene. A candidate must receive approval of his or her local pastor and be approved by the local church board to hold a local minister's license.

STEP TWO: ENROLL WITH THE DISTRICT MINISTERIAL STUDIES BOARD (DMSB)

Once a candidate has received a local license, the candidate should enroll in the DMSB by contacting the Ministerial Studies Board Secretary listed under Key Contact Information in the back of this handbook, and take at least six courses with passing (C or better) grades (including History and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene) before applying for a district minister's license. When a candidate enrolls with the DMSB the candidate will be expected to have a minimum of a High School Diploma or GED. You can download the application from our website – www.vanazedboard.org. The Chairman of the DMSB will evaluate the candidate's academic transcripts and will notify the candidate as to their placement in the course of study.

STEP THREE: APPLY FOR A DISTRICT MINISTER'S LICENSE

After having a local minister's license for at least one year, and successfully passing at least six courses (including the History and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene), a candidate may approach his or her pastor and request that the local church board recommend the candidate to the DMSB and the DMCB for a district minister's license.

STEP FOUR: PARTICIPATE IN THE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Once the local church board has approved the application of a candidate for a district minister's license, the candidate may obtain and complete an application for district minister's license from the district secretary. Upon completion of the application, the candidate will be notified of the date, time, and place for the district assessments. After successfully completing the assessment process, the candidate will be recommended to the district assembly for approval of the district minister's license.

STEP FIVE: RECEIVE YOUR DISTRICT LICENSE

Candidates receiving their first district minister's license are expected to attend the district assembly that year. Having been approved by the district assembly, their license will be received through a special presentation during the ordination service of the district assembly.

Candidates who have received their district minister's license have a maximum of ten years to complete their educational requirements for ordination. We expect each candidate to complete a minimum of two courses each year in order to maintain their district minister's license. A candidate must also receive the approval of his or her pastor, the local church board, the DMSB, and the DMCB in order to maintain their district minister's license each year. **Each candidate is responsible to keep in touch with the District Resource Center in order to obtain schedules for meetings which they will be required to attend.** Candidates **must** update the secretary of the DMSB with their current address, phone number, and email address. Candidates **must also** notify the Dean of the District Training Center of any change in their address information.

STEP SIX: RECEIVE YOUR ORDINATION CREDENTIAL

Ordination is a privilege, not a right. When a candidate has completed all educational and service time requirements for ordination, the candidate may request an ordination interview with the Credentials Board. The candidate is to complete both an ordination application and a renewal of district minister's license application. Both requests will be considered by the Credentials Board which may respond in the following manner: (1) Recommend the candidate for renewal of district minister's license and recommend for ordination; (2) Recommend only for the renewal of district minister's license and recommend that the candidate re-apply for ordination in a subsequent year; or (3) in rare cases the Board may refer the candidate back to the local church

for local license. In cases where the candidate is recommended for ordination, the recommendation of the Credentials Board is forwarded to the District Assembly for official action. The general superintendent in jurisdiction presiding at the District Assembly has final authority on who will be ordained and must approve each candidate individually. When the approvals are granted the candidate is ordained at the Annual District Assembly.

CHAPTER FIVE:

Credentialing Process

All of the above steps can be reinforced through our online credentials process. The following web link http://www.vanaz.org/MINISTERIAL_CREDENTIALS/ is a place where the required paperwork for each step and where appropriate contact information can be obtained.

Being aware of the dates for the annual credential meetings and the paperwork needed for making an appointment is the responsibility of the candidate. Leaders are available to help guide you and coach you, however, the responsibility for follow-through rests with you!

Failing to follow-through with deadlines for filing paperwork and setting appointments to meet with the appropriate board can impact the outcome of your credentialing process. Please follow these simple steps in the credentialing process.

1. Take responsibility for the process: educate yourself every year on what paperwork is necessary and submission deadlines. Remember, ministry demands responsibility. Take initiative!
2. Know the key leaders: stay informed on the key leaders you must update on a weekly, monthly and annual basis. Your local pastor, your educational advisor, and the leaders of the various departments in the credentialing process are great resources to assist you with staying informed.
3. Keep your information current with the District Resource Center: take responsibility for updating the DRC with your current address, email and phone contact information. It is not the DRC's responsibility to keep up with you, it is your responsibility to keep them informed.
4. Be on time: when you set a meeting show up on time, there is nothing worse than being the one who makes the meeting run longer. Be on time or early and make sure everything is in order for your annual interview meetings.
5. Review the website quarterly: because our system is under continuous improvement we may modify the website and process to make everything more effective. Stay up on what the website is offering and be ready to respond to changes in the system as you move along in the credentialing process. (www.vanaz.org)
6. Be a part of the mentoring meetings offered by the district superintendent: every year those who are nearing the requirements for ordination will be expected to attend a mentoring meeting with our District Leader. Please note the dates for this meeting and proactively accept the challenge to attend.

We believe that the call of God upon your life is confirmed by the Holy Spirit and by the Body of Christ. Remember, the credentialing of a minister is a process of calling and confirmation. Not only do we desire to know that God has called you, we also want the body of Christ to affirm the gifts and graces in you for such a calling. Being a leader in this process will help that outcome.

CHAPTER SIX:

Credentialing Process for Associate Pastors:

Associate pastors have different regulations than those who are the principal pastor in charge of the local church. It is asked of the associate pastor to have a journal in which they will note and write about the development of their ministry and duties in the local church or in the District. This includes:

1. Time invested in preparation of their sermons.
2. Time invested in preparing each Bible study for home Bible cells, Sunday school, or discipleship.
3. Time invested in ministering, worship service, Sunday school, Bible study, cells or discipleship.
4. Time invested in visitation; for the purpose of evangelism, discipleship or consolidation/assimilation.
5. Time invested in prayer for winning soul for Christ, consolidation, discipleship, for the pastor or leaders of the church.
6. Time invested in leadership development classes with their pastor and leaders of Bible cells.
7. Time invested ministering to and with the youth of the local church.
8. Time invested in preparing for the worship service on Sunday or preparing and rehearsing music.
9. Time invested in any other ministry appointed by the pastor.

All ministry students who are not the lead pastor will be asked to keep such journal. Each associate pastor must bring a completed journal to the license renewal interview. The journal is to be signed by the local pastor. Please, no excuses, because the Chairman of the Ministerial Studies Board will be firm in asking for this journal.

It is the responsibility of each associate to keep track of this journal and present it to the pastor of the local church for approval and signature.

It is the responsibility of the church pastor to provide opportunities to the licensed ministers associates so that they may practice in all areas of their pastoral ministry.

Pastors and local church boards are asked not to recommend any minister for a district license who has not followed this journal guideline.

KEY CONTACT INFORMATION:

CHAIRMAN: MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALS BOARD VIRGINIA DISTRICT

Dr. Phil Fuller, District Superintendent

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