

“Through God’s mercy we have this ministry...”
2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-12

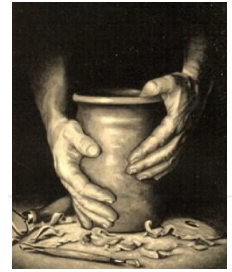
MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE GATHERING
FOR LOCAL & DISTRICT LICENSED MINISTERS PURSUING ORDINATION

SACRAMENTO DISTRICT CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE
November 15, 2024

MINISTERIAL CANDIDATE GATHERING 2024

Sacramento District Church of the Nazarene

*FOR LOCAL & DISTRICT LICENSED MINISTERS PURSUING ORDINATION:
To inform, provide interaction, and confirm the formational journey
of ministerial students enrolled in the Course of Study for Ordination.*



SEMINAR OUTLINE

- **Understanding a Theology of Ordination**
 - **Spiritual Calling & Vocational Ministry**
- **The Approval Process for Licensing & Ordination**
 - **Study Guide for the Articles of Faith**
 - **Pastoral Leadership**
 - **Engagement in a Mentoring Relationship**
 - **Resources and the District Calendar**
 - **Articles of Faith**
 - **Statement of Belief**
 - **Course of Study Outlines (Elder & Deacon)**
- **Guide to Ministerial Preparation & Ordination**

CHURCH OF  THE NAZARENE

MANUAL - 2017

502. Theology of Ordination. While affirming the scriptural tenet of the universal priesthood and ministry of all believers, ordination reflects the biblical belief that God calls and gifts certain men and

women for ministerial leadership in the church. Ordination is the authenticating, authorizing act of the Church, which recognizes and confirms God’s call to ministerial leadership as stewards and proclaimers of the gospel and the Church of Jesus Christ. Consequently, ordination bears witness to the Church universal and the world at large that this candidate evidences an exemplary life of holiness, possesses gifts and graces for public ministry, and has a thirst for knowledge, especially for the Word of God, and has the capacity to communicate sound doctrine.

(Acts 13:1-3; 20:28; Romans 1:1-2; 1 Timothy 4:11-16; 5:22; 2 Timothy 1:6-7)

502.1. The Church of the Nazarene depends largely upon the spiritual qualifications, character, and manner of life of its ministers. (538.17)

502.2. The minister of the gospel in the Church of the Nazarene must have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and be sanctified wholly by the baptism with or infilling of the Holy Spirit. The minister must have a deep love for unbelievers, believing they are perishing, and a call to proclaim salvation.

502.3. The minister is to be an example to the church: punctual, discreet, diligent, earnest, in purity, understanding, patience, kindness, love, and truth by the power of God (2 Corinthians 6:6-7).

502.4. The minister must likewise have a deep sense of the necessity of believers going on to perfection and developing the Christian graces in practical living, that their “love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight” (Philippians 1:9). One who would minister in the Church of the Nazarene must have a strong appreciation of both salvation and Christian ethics.

502.5. The minister should respond to opportunities to mentor future ministers and to nurture the call to ministry.

502.6. The minister must have gifts and graces, for the ministry. He or she will have a thirst for knowledge, especially of the Word of God, and must have sound judgment, good understanding, and clear views concerning salvation as revealed in the Scriptures. Saints will be edified and sinners converted through his or her ministry. Further, the minister of the gospel in the Church of the Nazarene must be an example in prayer.

SPIRITUAL CALLING & VOCATIONAL MINISTRY

Establishing Clarity & Purpose for the Kingdom of God

1. What do you sense is your spiritual calling in life?

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2. In what ways do you believe God has gifted you to serve in His name?

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3. Do you have a clear sense of calling to enter into vocational or bi-vocational ministry, and what confirmation do you have for it at this time?

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4. Summarize what you sense is the scriptural basis for your personal call to vocational ministry:

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5. Who has effectively modeled a clear calling to vocational or bi vocational ministry for you and in what ways have they demonstrated this to you?

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THE APPROVAL PROCESS FOR LICENSING & ORDINATION

Effective January 1, 2023



A. STEP ONE – Applying for a Local Minister’s License:

1. **To BEGIN** the credentialing process, the local church board and senior pastor must recommend and

grant you a local minister's license for a minimum of one year, with the following conditions:

- a. Complete a Local Minister's License Application packet and be approved by the Local Church Board; submitted to the District Office. Application and Guidelines available at www.sacnaz.org
 - b. Consent to an official background check prior to approval for a first district license. The District Office will be able to assist all local license candidates in completing this procedure.
 - c. If you have personally experienced a divorce, you must complete the appropriate forms prior to application for a district minister's license. Please notify the District Superintendent for instructions and forms regarding this requirement.
2. **WHEN YOU RECEIVE** your first local license, you must begin an approved course of study. However, you may begin to complete classes within the course of study prior to being locally licensed. To enter the course of study please contact the Sacramento District Institute of Ministry Director. (see [pg. 12](#))
3. **IF POSSIBLE**, please complete the following classes in the **first two years** of the course of study:
- a. Nazarene Church History & Polity, and
 - b. Exploring Christian Holiness or Doctrine of Holiness
- * The above two classes must be completed at either a Nazarene University, through the Sacramento District Institute of Ministry (SDIM), or through the following online institutions (NBC or NNU).

B. STEP TWO – Applying for a District License:

1. **ALL LOCAL LICENSED AND DISTRICT LICENSED** students will receive a District License Application Packet by mid-December of each year. All documents are returned to the District Office unless otherwise noted.
2. **TO APPLY FOR YOUR FIRST DISTRICT LICENSE** you must complete the following steps [by January 15, 2025](#):
 - a. **submit** an official Application for Minister's License
 - b. **complete** one fourth of the approved Course of Study, and be recommended by your local church board and senior pastor to the District Ministerial Studies/Credentials Boards.
 - c. **submit** official transcripts for all completed courses to the Ministerial Studies Secretary. (see district resources page below) Transcripts will be reviewed and you will be placed in the respective year of study.
 - d. **confirm** that you are in an official mentoring relationship with an approved pastoral leader.
 - e. **complete** both the online "*Leading From Your Strengths Assessment*" and "*CliftonStrengths*" online survey (only one time), and submit them to the District Superintendent and your mentor.
 - f. **identify** an assigned ministry in your local church as agreed upon by you, your local pastor, and the local church board (see more on "Assigned Ministry" below).
3. **AFTER ALL REQUESTED DOCUMENTS ARE RECEIVED** by the District Office, you will be scheduled to meet with the Ministerial Studies & Credentials Boards in their candidate interviews on [February 24-26, 2025](#).

C. STEP THREE – Renewing a District License:

1. **A DISTRICT LICENSE IS GRANTED FOR ONE YEAR**, and is renewed annually only when:
 - a. **an Application Packet** for renewal is submitted to the District Office, **and**
 - b. **two approved courses** are completed within the course of study **each year, and**
 - c. **satisfactory development** has been affirmed by a local church board and senior/lead pastor, **and**
 - d. **a written recommendation** has been submitted by your senior pastor or approved mentor, **and**

- e. **a written assignment** on the *Articles of Faith* has been submitted to the District Office, **and**
- f. **you are currently** in an “Assigned Ministry” role, which includes,
 - 1) specifically outlined ministry responsibilities in the local church
 - 2) monthly accountability with the senior/lead pastor and the local church board
 - 3) a paid or unpaid compensation agreement, with a full time or part time schedule.
- g. **you meet with and are approved by** the Ministerial Studies & Credentials Boards



C. STEP FOUR – Applying for Ordination:

To apply for and be considered for election to ordination, you must complete the renewal of your current district license as outlined in C. STEP THREE – Renewing a District License above, AND be:

- a. **A MINISTER IN GOOD STANDING, and**
- b. **RECOMMENDED IN WRITING** by your local church board and senior/lead pastor, **and**
- c. **GRANTED A DISTRICT LICENSE** for a minimum of three **consecutive** years, **and**
- d. **A GRADUATE** of the Course of Study, **and**
- e. serving as an officially “Assigned Minister” FULL TIME for at least three consecutive years.
For PART-TIME associates, **consecutive** years of ministry are increased, based on documented local church ministry records.

▸ Key words for License Renewal & Election to Ordination, **LICENSED & ASSIGNED in CONSECUTIVE YEARS!**

D. The Annual Candidate Interview for District License and Ordination:

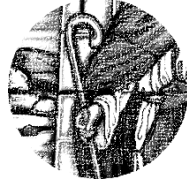
1. The Annual Interview is conducted at the District Office in Loomis, CA, unless announced otherwise.
2. You will be scheduled to meet with two district boards in a two-part interview:
 - a. **PART ONE** - The Ministerial Studies Board will review your progress in the course of study, confirm the year in which you are currently placed (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, or Graduate year), and review your ongoing mentoring relationship.
 - b. **PART TWO** - The Ministerial Credentials Board will review your personal growth, ministry development, and will conduct an oral examination through interview questions according to your year of progress, which **may or may not** be the same interview year as your course of study year (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th year & beyond). The Credentials Interview will include a 12-15 minute presentation by you from the assigned Articles of Faith for your respective year.

For more info see ministerial licensing & ordination in the Church of the Nazarene Manual paragraphs 523-526.3

STUDY GUIDE FOR THE ARTICLES OF FAITH

Knowing them and proclaiming them

1. Preparing for the annual interview with the Ministerial Credentials Board:



- a. Please submit the Articles of Faith written assignment on the template that will be included in the District License Application Packet by **January 15,** featuring a summary of the four Articles of Faith that have been assigned to your respective year. *(This is in addition to submitting an official district license application and transcripts.)*
- b. In the written assignment please respond to the following questions for each Article:
- 1) What do you consider to be the key words and the most significant phrases in each of the assigned Articles? Please identify the phrases and briefly explain why they are significant to the life of a believer in Jesus Christ from each Article of Faith.
 - 2) Select at least two scriptures referenced under each Article in this Study Guide that you believe are most helpful in communicating the significance of the Article. Briefly explain why your scripture references support a clear understanding of each Article of Faith.

Example:

Article **12 - Baptism**

- Significant words/phrases: **sacrament, proclaiming faith, means of grace,** etc.
These words help articulate what this Article of Faith means because...
- The following scripture references help articulate what this Article of Faith means because...

2. Presenting the Articles of Faith in the Credentials Board interview:

- a. Please be prepared to give a 12-15 minute presentation to include all four of the assigned Articles of Faith for your respective year. In this presentation you will be evaluated on the following abilities:
- 1) to articulate what we believe in reference to each Article of Faith;
 - 2) to identify AND present at least two scriptural references for each Article of Faith, using a printed Bible, without notes or images; and
 - 3) to effectively communicate, as if you were in a teaching/preaching setting at a local church.

PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Core Values of People based Ministry

Available – how effective are you at listening, and in what ways are you fulfilled by what it means to truly care about people?

Approachable – how naturally do you extend a spirit of welcome and care for those you serve in the church and local community?

Accountable – in what ways are you an organized self-starter, and how common is it for you to need to be motivated during any given week?

ENGAGEMENT IN A **Mentoring** RELATIONSHIP

Please be ready to sufficiently describe this in your candidate interview:



Minister:
Sacramento District Chur

1. Identify an ordained pastoral leader with whom you have established an ongoing mentoring relationship. Clarify that this relationship includes transparency, honesty, accountability, encouragement, and mutual trust.
2. Commit yourself to listen and learn from your mentor. Openly share what you both are thinking about and envisioning in your current ministries.
3. When you meet together, be sure to include:
 - o personal updates (personal wellness, challenges, family matters),
 - o ministry topics of growth and concern,
 - o review of your *“Leading From Your Strengths Assessment,”* and
 - o discussion about being an effective follower of Jesus Christ and pastoral leader.
4. Schedule your meeting times to be in person, once a month, for the first 4-6 months, then either continue at that rate, or more frequently if appropriate for you and your mentor. Set a specific amount of time to meet, whether it's over coffee, a meal, etc. For example, 1-2 hours, 2-3 hours, etc., as appropriate.
5. Create opportunities to pray over each other, whether by phone, an office setting, or if the situation allows, in a restaurant or coffee house setting.
6. **IF** you are married, at some point create an opportunity to meet together with your spouse and mentor, perhaps over a meal or fellowship to provide accountability in connecting your mentoring relationship with your personal life.

A HELPFUL RESOURCE - MENTORING: A WAY OF LIFE

<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2017/03/Mentoring-A-way-of-life>

IDENTIFYING & DEVELOPING YOUR STRENGTHS

B. CliftonStrengths (formerly Strengthsfinder 2.0) - Required

Identify your "Signature Themes" as helpful understandings in your giftedness for leadership.

1. To access CliftonStrengths go to:

<https://www.gallup.com/cliftonstrengths/en/253676/how-cliftonstrengths-works.aspx>

You will be required to purchase this resource at one of two price levels.

You can select either option to submit with your District License Application.

2. Please forward a copy of your results to the District Office, and include your Mentor in the same manner as directed for "Leading From Your Strengths" above (#5, 6, 7).

3. You are encouraged to have your Senior/Lead Pastor or an approved pastoral leader serve as your Mentor. You are responsible for scheduling monthly sessions with your Mentor. You are

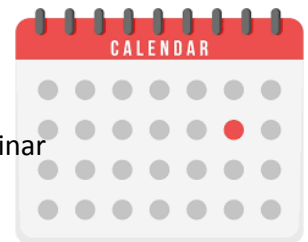
encouraged to review the results of the CliftonStrengths, as often as

it is helpful, with your Mentor in your ongoing development of the credentialing process.



4. Mentoring sessions should take place "in person" to allow for genuine interaction and prayer.

CALENDAR & RESOURCES FOR 2023-2024



___ November 16, 2024	Sacramento District Ministerial Candidate Seminar
___ December 11, 2024	First Emailing of Application Packet
___ January 6, 2024	Second Emailing of Application Packet to all candidates & pastors
___ January 7, 2025	Form 2 – Explanation of Divorce filing and interview
___ January 15, 2025	All Application Packet materials and completed coursework are due (application, transcripts, written assignment, pastoral recommendation, etc.)
___ January 25, 2025	Leadership Development Day
___ February 24-26, 2025	Annual Ministerial Studies & Credentials Board Candidate Interviews

___ **May 2-3, 2025**

Auburn Parkside

The Reunion: District Assembly/Youth-Missions Conventions,

___ **June 20-22, 2025**

Ministerial Candidate Workshop/PLNU

___ **November 2025**

Sacramento District Ministerial Candidate Seminar - TBD

District Resources:

1. **District Secretary** (*Credential transfers & interview schedules*)
Rev. Jon Fitzpatrick: topastorjon@sbcglobal.net, (530) 842-2689, 415 Evergreen Ln., Yreka, CA 96097
2. **Ministerial Studies Secretary** (*Receives and evaluates student transcripts*)
Rev. Dan Hopkins: dan@plaznaz.com, (209) 985-6064, 6040 Mother Lode Dr., Placerville, CA 95667
3. **Sacramento District Institute of Ministry Director** (*SDIM Enrollment/Class schedule/instructors*)
Dr. Leon Skinner: skinner95833@gmail.com, (916) 346-8892, 130 Soaring Hawk Ln, Sacramento, CA 95833
4. **District Superintendent** (*Chairperson & Coordinator for the Credential Process*)
Rev. Darren Reed, dred@sacnaz.org (916) 652-1193 ext 4, 6235 S. Walnut Street, Loomis, CA 95650
5. **District Executive Assistant** (*Don't know where to start? She knows!*)
Mariah Zimmerman: mzimmerman@sacnaz.org, (916) 652-1193, ext. 2, 6235 S. Walnut Street, Loomis, CA 95650

Additional Resources:

1. **Center for Pastoral Leadership/PLNU**, (*Ministerial Candidate Workshop, Leadership Seminars*)
<https://www.pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/center-pastoral-leadership>
Dr. Ron Benefiel, Director: RonBenefiel@pointloma.edu, (619) 849-2410

Pastor JJ Tuttle: Carson City – Connected Church of the Nazarene (Leadership Cohort)
houseoftut@gmail.com
2. **Clergy Development**, Church of the Nazarene Global Ministry Center
<https://nazarene.org/what-we-do/education/clergy>
17001 Prairie Star Parkway, Lenexa, KS 66220, (800) 306-7651, pastor@nazarene.org

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE/ARTICLES OF FAITH (2017)



I. The Triune God

We believe in one eternally existent, infinite God, Sovereign Creator and Sustainer of the universe; that He only is God, holy in nature, attributes, and purpose. The God who is holy love and light is Triune in essential being, revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (*Matthew 3:16-17; John 14:1-31; Galatians 4:4-6*)

II. Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Triune Godhead; that He was eternally one with the Father; that He became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and was born of the Virgin Mary, so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say the Godhead and manhood, are thus united in one Person very God and very man, the God-man.

We believe that Jesus Christ died for our sins, and that He truly arose from the dead and took again His body, together with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith He ascended into heaven and is there engaged in intercession for us.

(*Luke 1:26-35; John 1:1-18; Acts 2:22-36; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:12-22*)

III. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Triune Godhead, that He is ever present and efficiently active in and with the Church of Christ, convincing the world of sin, regenerating those who repent and believe, sanctifying believers, and guiding into all truth as it is in Jesus.

(*John 16:7-15; Romans 8:1-27; Ephesians 3:14-21*)

IV. The Holy Scriptures

We believe in the plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, by which we understand the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, given by divine inspiration, inerrantly revealing the will of God concerning us in all things necessary to our salvation, so that whatever is not contained therein is not to be enjoined as an article of faith. (*2 Timothy 3:14-17; 1 Peter 1:8-12; 2 Peter 1:16-21*)

V. Sin, Original and Personal

5. We believe that sin came into the world through the disobedience of our first parents, and death by sin. We believe that sin is of two kinds: original sin or depravity, and actual or personal sin.

5.1. We believe that original sin, or depravity, is that corruption of the nature of all the offspring of Adam by reason of which everyone is very far gone from original righteousness or the pure state of our first parents at the time of their creation, is averse to God, is without spiritual life, and inclined to evil, and that continually. We further believe that original sin continues to exist with the new life of the regenerate, until the heart is fully cleansed by the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

5.2. We believe that original sin differs from actual sin in that it constitutes an inherited propensity to actual sin for which no one is accountable until its divinely provided remedy is neglected or rejected.

5.3. We believe that actual or personal sin is a voluntary violation of a known law of God by a morally responsible person. It is therefore not to be confused with involuntary and inescapable shortcomings, infirmities, faults, mistakes, failures, or other deviations from a standard of perfect conduct that are the residual effects of the Fall. However, such innocent effects do not include attitudes or responses contrary to the spirit of Christ, which may properly be called sins of the spirit. We believe that personal sin is primarily and essentially a violation of the law of love; and that in relation to Christ sin may be defined as unbelief.

Original sin: (Mark 7:14-23; Romans 1:18-32; 7:1-8:8; Galatians 5:16-21)

Personal sin: (Romans 6:15-23; John 3:18-20; 1 John 1:6-2:4; 3:4-10)

VI. Atonement

We believe that Jesus Christ, by His sufferings, by the shedding of His own blood, and by His death on the Cross, made a full atonement for all human sin, and that this Atonement is the only ground of salvation, and that it is sufficient for every individual of Adam's race. The Atonement is graciously efficacious for the salvation of those incapable of moral responsibility and for the children in innocency but is efficacious for the salvation of those who reach the age of responsibility only when they repent and believe.

(Isaiah 53:1-6; John 3:14-17; Romans 3:21-26; 5:6-21; Colossians 1:19-23; 1 Peter 1:18-22)

VII. Prevenient Grace

7. We believe that the grace of God through Jesus Christ is freely bestowed upon all people, enabling all who will to turn from sin to righteousness, believe on Jesus Christ for pardon and cleansing from sin, and follow good works pleasing and acceptable in His sight. We also believe that the human race's creation in Godlikeness included the ability to choose between right and wrong, and that thus human beings were made morally responsible; that through the fall of Adam they became depraved so that they cannot now turn and prepare themselves by their own natural strength and works to faith and calling upon God.

Godlikeness and moral responsibility: (Genesis 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 28:1-3; Micah 6:8)

Natural inability: (Psalms 14:1-4; Romans 3:10-12; 7:14-25)

Free grace and works of faith: (Romans 5:6-8; Ephesians 2:4-10; Colossians 1:21-23)

VIII. Repentance

8. We believe the Spirit of God gives to all who will repent the gracious help of penitence of heart and hope of mercy, that they may believe unto pardon and spiritual life. Repentance, which is a sincere and thorough change of the mind in regard to sin, involving a sense of personal guilt and a voluntary turning away from sin, is demanded of all who have by act or purpose become sinners against God.

We believe that all persons may fall from grace and apostatize and, unless they repent of their sins, be hopelessly and eternally lost. We believe that regenerate persons need not return to sin but may live in unbroken fellowship with God through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit who bears witness with our spirits that we are children of God. (*2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 55:6-7; Ezekiel 33:14-16*)

IX. Justification, Regeneration, and Adoption

9. We believe that justification is the gracious and judicial act of God by which He grants full pardon of all guilt and complete release from the penalty of sins committed, and acceptance as righteous, to all who believe on Jesus Christ and receive Him as Lord and Savior.

9.1. We believe that regeneration, or the new birth, is that gracious work of God whereby the moral nature of the repentant believer is spiritually quickened and given a distinctively spiritual life, capable of faith, love, and obedience.

9.2. We believe that adoption is that gracious act of God by which the justified and regenerated believer is constituted a child of God.

9.3. We believe that justification, regeneration, and adoption are simultaneous in the experience of seekers after God and are received by faith, preceded by repentance; and that to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness. (*John 1:12-13; Romans 3:21-26; 8:15-17; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:16-21; Titus 3:4-7*)

X. Christian Holiness and Entire Sanctification

10. We believe that sanctification is the work of God which transforms believers into the likeness of Christ. It is wrought by God's grace through the Holy Spirit in initial sanctification, or regeneration (simultaneous with justification), entire sanctification, and the continued perfecting work of the Holy Spirit culminating in glorification. In glorification we are fully conformed to the image of the Son.

We believe that entire sanctification is that act of God, subsequent to regeneration, by which believers are made free from original sin, or depravity, and brought into a state of entire devotement to God, and the holy obedience of love made perfect.

It is wrought by the baptism with or infilling of the Holy Spirit, and comprehends in one experience the cleansing of the heart from sin and the abiding, indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, empowering the believer for life and service. Entire sanctification is provided by the blood of Jesus, is wrought instantaneously by grace through faith, preceded by entire consecration; and to this work and state of grace the Holy Spirit bears witness.

This experience is also known by various terms representing its different phases, such as "Christian perfection," "perfect love," "heart unity," "the baptism with or infilling of the Holy Spirit," "the fullness of the blessing," and "Christian holiness."

10.1. We believe that there is a marked distinction between a pure heart and a mature character. The former is obtained in an instant, the result of entire sanctification; the latter is the result of growth in grace.

We believe that the grace of entire sanctification includes the divine impulse to grow in grace as a Christlike disciple. However, this impulse must be consciously nurtured, and careful attention given to the requisites and processes of spiritual development and improvement in Christlikeness of character and

personality. Without such purposeful endeavor, one's witness may be impaired and the grace itself frustrated and ultimately lost.

Participating in the means of grace, especially the fellowship, disciplines, and sacraments of the Church, believers grow in grace and in wholehearted love to God and neighbor. (Ezekiel 36:25-28; Romans 6:11-14; 12:1-2; 12:9-21; Galatians 5:16-26; Ephesians 3:14-21; Philippians 2:1-16; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8)

XI. The Church

We believe in the Church, the community that confesses Jesus Christ as Lord, the covenant people of God made new in Christ, the Body of Christ called together by the Holy Spirit through the Word.

God calls the Church to express its life in the unity and fellowship of the Spirit; in worship through the preaching of the Word, observance of the sacraments, and ministry in His name; by obedience to Christ, holy living, and mutual accountability.

The mission of the Church in the world is to share in the redemptive and reconciling ministry of Christ in the power of the Spirit. The Church fulfills its mission by making disciples through evangelism, education, showing compassion, working for justice, and bearing witness to the kingdom of God.

The Church is a historical reality, which organizes itself in culturally conditioned forms; exists both as local congregations and as a universal body; sets apart persons called of God for specific ministries. God calls the Church to live under His rule in anticipation of the consummation at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (*Matthew 16:13-19; 28:19-20; Acts 2:42-47; Ephesians 4:1-16; Hebrews 10:19-25; 1 Peter 2:9-12*)

XII. Baptism

12. We believe that Christian baptism, commanded by our Lord, is a sacrament signifying acceptance of the benefits of the atonement and incorporation into the Body of Christ. Baptism is a means of grace proclaiming faith in Jesus Christ as Savior. It is to be administered to believers indicating their full purpose of obedience in holiness and righteousness. As participants in the new covenant, young children and the morally innocent may be baptized upon request of parents or guardians. The church shall give assurance of Christian training. Baptism may be administered by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. (*Matthew 28:16-20; Romans 6:3-10; Galatians 3:26-28; 1 Peter 3:18-22*)

XIII. The Lord's Supper

13. We believe that the Communion Supper instituted by our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is a sacrament, proclaiming His life, sufferings, sacrificial death, resurrection, and the hope of His coming again. The Lord's Supper is a means of grace in which Christ is present by the Spirit. All are invited to participate by faith in Christ and be renewed in life, salvation, and in unity as the Church. All are to come in reverent appreciation of its significance, and by it show forth the Lord's death until He comes. Those who have faith in Christ and love for the saints are invited by Christ to participate as often as possible. (*Exodus 12:1-14; Matthew 26:26-29; John 6:28-58; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32*)

XIV. Divine Healing

14. We believe in the biblical doctrine of divine healing and urge our people to offer the prayer of faith for the healing of the sick. We also believe God heals through the means of medical science. (*Psalm 103:1-5; Matthew 4:23-25; James 5:13-16*)

XV. Second Coming of Christ

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again; that we who are alive at His coming shall not precede them that are asleep in Christ Jesus; but that, if we are abiding in Him, we shall be caught up with the risen saints to meet the Lord in the air, so that we shall ever be with the Lord.

(*John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Peter 3:3-14; Revelation 22:7-17*)

XVI. Resurrection, Judgment, and Destiny

16. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, that the bodies both of the just and of the unjust shall be raised to life and united with their spirits— “they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

16.1. We believe in future judgment in which every person shall appear before God to be judged according to his or her deeds in this life.

16.2. We believe that glorious and everlasting life is assured to all who savingly believe in, and obediently follow, Jesus Christ our Lord; and that the finally impenitent shall suffer eternally in hell. (*Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 2:5-10; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Revelation 20:11-15*)



AGREED STATEMENT OF BELIEF/CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

We believe in one God-the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

We believe that the Old and New Testament Scriptures, given by plenary inspiration, contain all truth necessary to faith and Christian living.

We believe that man is born with a fallen nature, and is, therefore, inclined to evil, and that continually.

We believe that the finally impenitent are hopelessly and eternally lost.

We believe that the atonement through Jesus Christ is for the whole human race; and that whosoever repents and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is justified and regenerated and saved from the dominion of sin.



We believe that believers are to be sanctified wholly, subsequent to regeneration,
through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe that the Holy Spirit bears witness to the new birth, and also to the entire sanctification of believers.

We believe that our Lord will return, the dead will be raised, and the final judgment will take place.



Course of Study – Student Progress Form - ELDER

Sacramento District Ministerial Studies Board

ELDER TRACK		Student Name:	Date Enrolled:
Date Completed	Previous Credit	Course Recommended Sequence for the Sacramento District	School or Online Name/Notes
		WRITING & RESEARCH SKILLS:	• <i>English Composition</i>
		BIBLICAL LITERATURE:	
		• <i>Introduction to the Old Testament</i>	
		• <i>Introduction to the New Testament</i>	
		• <i>The Pentateuch (Genesis-Deuteronomy)</i>	
		• <i>The Old Testament Prophets</i>	
		• <i>The New Testament Gospels</i>	
		• <i>The Pauline Epistles</i>	
		CHURCH HISTORY:	
		• <i>History and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene</i>	
		• <i>Western World in Ancient and Medieval Times</i>	
		• <i>Western World & the Emerging Modern Society</i>	
		EVANGELISM & MISSIONS:	
		• <i>Developing a Missional Church</i>	
		• <i>Global Evangelism/World Missions</i>	
		THEOLOGY:	
		• <i>Exploring Christian Holiness</i>	
		• <i>Systematic Theology I</i>	
		• <i>Systematic Theology II</i>	
		DISCIPLESHIP:	



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian Educational Ministries 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spiritual Formation 	
PROCLAIMING THE WORD:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biblical Interpretation/Hermeneutics 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian Preaching 1 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christian Preaching 2 	
		PHILOSOPHY:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophy & Christian Ethics
PRACTICAL MINISTRIES:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church Administration and Finance 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church Planting (<i>Req'd if COS started after 3/1/23</i>) 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foundations - Women's Ordination (<i>Req'd if COS started after 3/1/23</i>) 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastoral Care and Counseling 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Practice of Christian Ministry 	

Office Only: Minimum two classes completed: Yes No Course of Study Year: _____ Approval Date: _____
 Initial: _____

Course of Study – Student Progress Form - DEACON

Sacramento District Ministerial Studies Board

DEACON TRACK		Student Name:	Date Enrolled:
Date Completed	Previous Credit	Course Recommended Sequence for the Sacramento District	School or Online Name/Notes
		WRITING & RESEARCH SKILLS:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English Composition
BIBLICAL LITERATURE:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Old Testament 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the New Testament 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pentateuch (Genesis-Deuteronomy) 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Old Testament Prophets 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The New Testament Gospels 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pauline Epistles 	
CHURCH HISTORY:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • History and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western World in Ancient and Medieval Times 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western World & the Emerging Modern Society 	
EVANGELISM & MISSIONS:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a Missional Church 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global Evangelism/World Missions 	
THEOLOGY:			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring Christian Holiness 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic Theology I 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic Theology II 	

		DISCIPLESHIP:	
		• <i>Christian Educational Ministries</i>	
		• <i>Spiritual Formation</i>	
		INTERPRETING THE WORD:	• <i>Biblical Interp./Hermeneutics</i>
		DEACON MINISTRY FOCUS:	
		• <i>Age Group Related, Music, Outreach Ministries, etc.</i>	
		• <i>Age Group Related, Music, Outreach Ministries, etc.</i>	
		PHILOSOPHY:	• <i>Philosophy & Christian Ethics</i>
		PRACTICAL MINISTRIES:	
		• <i>Church Administration and Finance</i>	
		• <i>Church Planting (Req'd if COS started after 3/1/23)</i>	
		• <i>Foundations/Women's Ordination (Req'd if COS started after 3/1/23)</i>	
		• <i>Pastoral Care and Counseling</i>	
		• <i>The Practice of Christian Ministry</i>	

Office Only: Minimum two classes completed: Yes No Course of Study Year: _____ Approval Date: _____
Initial: _____

Guide to Ministerial Preparation

and

Ordination

**Church of the Nazarene
United States and Canada Region**

(Sacramento District Edition)

2024



Table of Contents

Welcome to the Journey	5
The Call	7
What does it mean to be “called”?	7
Pray about your call	8
Discovering gifts and graces for ministry	8
Register your call	9
Educational Preparation	10
The Course of Study	10
Educational paths	10
Records and responsibilities	11
Graduation and beyond	12
Licensing and Ministry Experience	13
The Local Minister’s License	13
<i>Renewing your Local Minister’s License</i>	14
The District Minister’s License	14
<i>Applying for a District Minister’s License</i>	15
<i>If you or your spouse have been divorced</i>	16
<i>The district interview process</i>	16
<i>Renewing your District Minister’s License</i>	17
Opportunities and Obligations	18
<i>Communicating with Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards</i>	18
Ministry Experience	19
<i>Mentoring</i>	20
Ordination	21
What is ordination?	21
The ordination interview	23
<i>Recognition of ordination</i>	24
The District Assembly	24
Lifelong Learning and Effective Ministry for a Lifetime	25
Appendix A: Abilities Statements	27
Appendix B: Registration Form	32

This resource has been prepared by the USA/Canada Regional
Course of Study Advisory Committee *with minor editorial
modifications to be in harmony with the applied practices of
the Sacramento District in partnership with*

GLOBAL CLERGY DEVELOPMENT
Church of the Nazarene 17001 Prairie Star Parkway Lenexa, Kansas 66220
www.nazarene.org, gecd@nazarene.org 800.306.7651 (05/2017)

❖ Welcome to the Journey

Preparing for ministry is a journey. The *Guide to Ministerial Preparation and Ordination* is a handbook designed to acquaint you with the journey and provide information and insight that will assist you in preparing well. This journey takes time along with a good dose of endurance. As you begin, think in terms of a 10K run rather than a sprint. Thankfully, you are not alone on this journey, though you must take responsibility for making wise, informed decisions. Along the way, prayerfully seek the wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit and make every effort to connect often with trusted persons willing to partner with you.

Partners on the journey

Your *pastor* serves as the first partner resourcing your journey into ministerial leadership. If you have not already talked with your pastor about your interest in and call to ministry, open that line of communication today! Your pastor will come alongside you as you discern your call, seek responsibilities in ministry, communicate with the district, find an educational provider, and begin the process of licensing in ministry.

Your local church is part of a network of churches called a *district*. The district leadership, including the district superintendent, District Advisory Board and District Board(s) of Ministry are also partners who will join together to prepare, challenge and mentor you. If your journey leads to ordination for ministerial leadership in the church, it will be the role of the district to affirm your call and recommend you for ordination.

Educational providers collaborate with local churches and districts to prepare women and men for a lifetime in ministry. If you are already on an educational path (such as attending a Nazarene college, university, or graduate school, or enrolled in a Nazarene non-degree ministry program), consider your instructors and advisors as partners on your journey in ministry. If you haven't begun the educational process, this handbook will help you select an educational provider.

Looking ahead

Although the path in ministry is unique to each individual, there are five common components that shape the journey of ministerial preparation.

The first component is **The Call**. For some who sense a call to a lifetime of ministry, that call is immediate and clear. For others, discerning God's calling is a longer process, with times of doubt

and uncertainty as well as excitement and hopefulness. Whatever your experience may be, the discussion on calling will help you and those partnering with you discern God's leading.

A broad and rich **Educational Preparation** is the second component and is essential to faithful and effective ministry. The Church of the Nazarene has provided several pathways by which you may

satisfy the educational requirements. Since this part of the journey takes several years to complete, it is important to carefully select a pathway that will be most fitting, challenging, and formative for your future in ministry. Beginning your educational preparation may help you if your sense of calling is not yet clear. It seems God often uses the learning process itself to bring clarity.

As you progress in your educational preparation and continue to participate in ministry, you may sense God continuing to affirm his calling you into ministerial leadership. If so, making further progress on your journey to ordination requires ministerial **Licensing and Ministry Experience**, the third component. Licensing involves the affirmation and continued confidence of the church regarding God's call upon your life. Ministry experience is about gradually expanding the level of your ministry responsibilities as a further validation of your progress in preparation. Gaining experience in ministry will help you and those who are partners in your development identify your strengths in ministry and areas in need of growth.

Ordination is the public act of the church's affirmation of God's calling you to a lifetime of service to the church. This component of the journey is not something to be entered into lightly; and it is important that you understand not only the process of ordination, but also its spiritual and theological significance.

While ordination is a profound recognition of your calling and preparation for ministry, it is not the end of your journey! Every minister is expected to continue growing and developing in his or her understanding and practice of ministry by participating often in **Lifelong Learning** opportunities. This is the final component common to each person committed to effective ministry for a lifetime.

With every step of this journey in Christian ministry remember, you are not alone. You join a company of saints and servants, many of whom will encourage, inspire and pray for you along the way. Most importantly, the Holy Spirit of God goes before and behind you. There is no path on this journey where God's grace cannot meet you.

It is likely you are feeling a degree of trepidation as you begin pursuing God's call on your life. At the same time, filled with great excitement as you think and pray about the possibilities of your future in ministry, there is a sense of anticipation as you enter into this season. Welcome to the Journey!

◆ The Call

As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people.” And immediately they left their nets and followed him. As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him.

(Mark 1:16-20, NRSV)

Throughout the witness of Christian scriptures and the life of the Church, God has called women and men to follow Jesus into a lifetime of ministry and service. Abraham, Moses, Deborah, Jeremiah, Mary, Peter, and Paul are examples of those hearing and responding to God’s call.

The journey you are beginning is your faithful response to God’s call. As you tell people you are pursuing a call to the ministry, they will ask questions you may find difficult to answer: “What kind of ministry are you called to?” “Do you want to be ordained?” “Do you think you’ll pastor a church someday?” “Where is God calling you to go?” Remember, you are just beginning; so, take some pressure off yourself! You don’t need clear answers to those questions at this point. Instead, concern yourself with seeking God’s heart, which is truly the central concern of this journey from start to finish.

What does it mean to be "called"?

As a Christian, you are called to ministry. For example, giving your life to Christ involves you in ministry in Christ’s body, the Church: "God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies." (1 Peter 4:9-10 NLT) When used in this broad sense, calling also involves being salt and light as we interact with believers and nonbelievers alike in the course of our day-to-day lives (1 Cor 10:31; 1 Peter 2:12).

Along with this calling of all followers of Jesus, God calls some women and men to specific roles and responsibilities in ministry as their primary vocation in life. This is the sense in which the language of calling is most often used in this handbook. This calling may be fulfilled in conjunction with another

vocation from which a person may draw his or her livelihood. And some who have received such a calling may fulfill that calling as lay members of the Church rather than through pursuing ordination. Examples include a missionary serving in a role not requiring a ministerial credential, a lay pastor, a Christian counselor, or those serving with a parachurch ministry, camping ministry, or other nonprofit.

Others fulfill their specific calling as members of the clergy, serving in roles and responsibilities that are best served by or require someone who holds a ministerial credential. Many of these are called to teach and preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. With this specific calling comes the title and responsibility of pastor, the shepherd of the people of God. If this title intimidates you or doesn't seem to fit at this point, open your heart and mind to follow God wherever this journey might lead. Let God shape your vision of calling, not fear or intimidation.

Some who witness to a specific calling to ministry, experience that calling with clarity from the start. Some have described sensing a call to be a missionary, for example. For others, the sense of calling to ministry emerges into clarity over time. If at some point along this journey you discern that continuing on a path of educational preparation for ministry leading toward ordination may not be the best path forward, explore other avenues of response to your calling in consultation with your pastor and other mature believers. On the other hand, if you discern (prayerfully and in consultation with your pastor and other mature believers) that ordained ministry is the way God is leading you to embrace your calling, then the journey described in this handbook has just begun!

Pray about your call

Whatever your call, you are clearly hearing God speaking to you in some way. This needs to be a season of deepening your prayer life. Prayer is an expression of devotion to the God who is calling you, and is essential to discerning His leading at every point, from selecting the right educational pathway to determining how and where to gain ministry experience. As you learn to listen to the Spirit speaking, don't become frustrated if clarity doesn't come right away concerning questions you may have about your calling or where your preparation will ultimately lead you. Instead, move forward prayerfully and with the helpful counsel of wise and godly people in your life, trusting God to give direction along the way.

Discovering gifts and graces for ministry

An important part of exploring your call is discovering the gifts and graces God has given you for ministry in the church. Your journey partners, pastor, church board, and district boards of ministry, will help you identify these as you pursue God's calling as you understand it at this time. Remember, you are not alone on this journey! Gifts and graces for ordained ministry become evident through the exposure and experience you gain by engaging in a variety of ministry opportunities. The church recognizes numerous expressions of vocational ministry arising from the gifts and graces given us. Reading Manual paragraphs 500-526.1 will help you gain a clearer understanding of this important point.

Register your call

If you are sensing that preparing for ordained ministry may be the appropriate response to your calling as you understand it at this time, one of your first steps is to discuss this with your pastor. He or she may suggest you are ready to take the next steps on your journey: applying for a Local Minister's License (see the section on Licensing and Ministry Experience) and registering your call with your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards. Registering your call creates a connection with your district and provides the Board of Ministry with the information it needs to help guide you in your educational preparation and in the credentialing process. Ask your pastor if your district has developed its own registration process. If so, follow that process; If not, you may wish to complete and submit the form found in Appendix B.

◆ Educational Preparation

A person called by God into Christian ministry is called to prepare. Your preparation process will include formal education, ministry experience and a variety of assessments. Your formal education will provide a vital foundation of knowledge and skills for ministry. In this chapter you will be introduced to the Nazarene Course of Study for ministerial preparation, the ability statements that drive the educational process, and the variety of pathways available to you.

The Course of Study

The Church of the Nazarene is committed to a high standard of educational preparation for its ministers. The goal is for every Nazarene minister to develop certain abilities and capacities, categorized into four areas of preparation: Content, Competency, Character and Context (see Appendix A for more details). *CONTENT* covers the basic knowledge and perspective you will need in the areas of Bible, theology, doctrine, and church history. *COMPETENCY* develops you for the wide-variety of ministry responsibilities involving communication, administration, critical thinking, pastoral care and counseling, and leading in worship. *CHARACTER* builds up the life of the minister in the areas of personal awareness and growth, ethics, and spiritual formation. *CONTEXT* shapes in the minister capacities to analyze, engage, and reach local communities for the sake of the gospel.

The focus of the educational preparation required of all Nazarene ministers is called "the Course of Study" -- an array of studies and practicums that develop the range of abilities described above. Recognizing that those preparing to serve as ministers represent a wide variety of circumstances and settings, the Church of the Nazarene has approved several avenues or paths for completing the Course of Study. Choosing the path of your educational preparation for ministry in the Church of the Nazarene is one of your most important decisions on this journey. As you prayerfully consider your options, be sure you also consult with those who understand the requirements of ministerial preparation in the Church of the Nazarene. Rather than consider only cost and convenience, approach this decision from the perspective of gaining the best preparation for a lifetime of ministry.

Educational paths

The Course of Study is delivered through a variety of curriculums **validated** (approved) by the Church of the Nazarene and available through our Nazarene universities, colleges, seminaries and some districts. To review a list of validated Course of Study programs, request the list from Global Education and Clergy Development (gecd@nazarene.org, 800-306-7651) or view the list online at

<http://nazarene.org/global-clergy-development> (select Board of Ministry Resources).

Many of the Course of Study programs offered in the Church of the Nazarene go above and beyond the minimum requirements to provide a full and comprehensive education. A degree in theology or

Christian ministry from a validated undergraduate program or a validated master's degree provides an invaluable breadth of study, experience and formation for life and ministry. In addition, many of these programs allow specialization in areas of interest. Such validated degree programs are available from each Nazarene university and college in the United States and from Ambrose University in Canada.

If you have completed a degree in another field, or have begun preparation for ministry in a non-validated degree program, you may determine that a *non-degree* program is your best option for completing the Course of Study. You may also determine this to be your best option if your location, family situation, language, or current employment is a barrier to completing a validated degree program at a Nazarene university or college, or at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Options available to you for completing the required Course of Study may include classes offered online, at district training centers, or during intensive residential programs.

Every pastor needs to have a library to resource ministry and to renew the soul. Throughout the journey of preparation, build your own library. The Wesleyan Holiness Digital Library (whdl.org) is a free resource that will be a helpful addition to your library, and most media and documents can be downloaded.

As you move toward a decision on the educational path you will take, be careful not to eliminate too quickly those options that seem to demand much from you. Instead, take time to wait on God in prayer, to fully explore the various options, and to carefully consider the counsel of those in whose lives you observe the ministry strength and depth you value. Fulfilling the requirements will challenge you. When the Apostle Paul writes, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength" he is speaking from a situation of enduring great suffering and sacrifice. Pursuing a quality education involves sacrifice and is essential to preparing you to offer your life as a living sacrifice and to minister in a way that is acceptable and pleasing to God. Challenge yourself at every step on this journey. Learn sacrifice now and it will lay the foundation of great faithfulness in your future. Remember, the Lord is with you!

Records and responsibilities

Education providers (our Nazarene universities and colleges, our seminary, and district training centers) and District Boards of Ministry are your partners on this journey. Education providers offer options and guidance as you select and pursue completion of a validated Course of Study program. Your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards has the responsibility of monitoring your progress in meeting the educational requirements for ordination and verifying your completion of the Course of Study. For this reason, you will need to report your educational progress to your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards each year. It is your responsibility to keep records received from your educational provider (or providers). This will help the partnership function well and resolve any confusion or discrepancy that may arise.

If you are considering completing the Course of Study from multiple education providers, it is important to understand the differences in the programs offered. Even though each program may be validated, course work will differ and courses may not transfer. This may mean you will be required to take more courses than you originally planned in order to complete the Course of Study. If you are completing a non-validated degree program, some of the coursework you have completed may be sufficient to count toward completion of the Course of Study. This is a determination made by your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards upon evaluation of your transcript and course syllabi.

In consultation with trusted and well-informed advisors, make a plan for your journey through the Course of Study and write it down. Share this plan with your pastor or mentor and with your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards. Some Districts require a specific pathway with prescribed coursework, depending on your educational background. Be sure your plan meets the District's guidelines as you continue your studies. Refer to this plan often and use it to mark your progress. Celebrate the milestones and remember that in your preparation you are answering the call to ministry!

Graduation and beyond

A period of 10 years is allowed for the completion of the Course of Study. This period of time begins the date you are granted your first district license. In extenuating circumstances, a District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards may approve a leave of absence and extend the time limit accordingly.

Once you have completed the Course of Study, your achievement will be recognized by action of the district assembly to graduate you from the Course of Study. This action by the district assembly is not to be confused with graduating with an academic degree. Nevertheless, being classified as a graduate of the Course of Study is an important milestone in the journey of your candidacy for ordination in that it certifies you have completed the basic educational preparation required.

With this recognition comes the responsibility of continuing to be an active learner. Of course, you do not have to wait until you complete the Course of Study before you look for and participate in lifelong learning opportunities. The sooner you develop the habit, the better. In fact, from this point forward you are to complete at least 20 lifelong learning hours each year and to report your learning activity annually to your district assembly. Find out more details in the final section of this handbook, including how to establish an account on the **Lifelong Learning Registry**.

◆ Licensing and Ministry Experience

In addition to educational preparation your journey also includes meeting licensing and experience requirements in order to be considered for ordination as a minister of the gospel of Christ. In the Church of the Nazarene, discerning gifts and graces for ministry involves refining your ministry skills through practical experience within the context of accountability to your local church and district.

A ministerial license is granted by the church both as a recognition of your testimony to being called into Christian ministry and as an affirmation that the gifts and graces for ministry are evident in your life. There are two levels of ministerial licensing granted sequentially to those who meet the requirements and who have been favorably recommended and approved: local and district.

The Local Minister's License

A Local Minister's License is granted by the church board where you are a member, upon recommendation of the pastor. This level of licensing normally comes after your pastor and local church leadership have had opportunity to observe your life and ministry involvement. Such observation most often happens informally as these leaders get to know you and serve alongside you. The local licensing process begins by 1) you completing an Application for Local Minister's License, 2) your pastor & Church Board completing a Request for Verification of Credential History, and 3) you consenting to a Department of Justice background check. Please contact your district office to receive the appropriate forms.

Once you have submitted your application to the pastor, consideration of your application will be added to the agenda of an upcoming church board meeting. At the time of the church board meeting approaches, you will be invited to interview with the church board. If you are married, they may ask your spouse to also participate in the interview. During the interview, you will be asked to present your testimony with special emphasis on your call. They may ask further questions as well. Most likely you will be excused from the board meeting at the time they discuss and vote on whether or not to approve your application.

If the church board grants you a Local Minister's License, it is hoped your pastor will present the license to you in a public church service, and perhaps invite you to share a few words of testimony about your relationship with the Lord and your calling to ministry. Members of the board and/or congregation may gather around you to pray for you as you embark on your journey of preparation for ministry in answer to God's calling. **It should be understood that with a Local Minister's License, you remain a lay member of the Church of the Nazarene. The title of "Reverend" or "Pastor" is reserved for those who are ordained or who hold a District Minister's License and are serving in an**

assigned ministry.

Having received a Local Minister's License, continue being actively involved in the ministry of your local church. You are encouraged to put into writing a covenant of what you hope to accomplish in your ministerial development and education as you embark on this journey, and to share this with

your pastor. Keep a copy of this covenant and update it periodically as you gain understanding, experience, and perspective from the education you receive and from your conversations with your pastor and other mentors. Tracking and reflecting on your progress can be a great source of encouragement and prepare you for the renewal of your Local Minister's License or for receiving a District Minister's License.

Once you have been granted a Local Minister's License, your pastor will guide you as to how to enroll with the District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards. One of the responsibilities of this board is to oversee your progress in completing the Course of Study. Of course, you will need to let this board know the educational path you plan to pursue. Should you move your local church membership to another Nazarene church, your journey will continue in partnership with your new church and the Board of Ministry of its district.

Nazarene Safe – The Church of the Nazarene has a zero tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse or misconduct with minors. Every local church must create and implement a process for screening volunteers and staff who work with minors, and have a policy in place for protecting minors. This policy should follow guidelines found on NazareneSafe.org.

All licensed ministers must be screened and trained in ministry safety procedures whether or not they work with children. This will include a criminal background check. Submitting a background check is part of the licensing process.

Renewing your Local Minister's License

A Local Minister's License must be renewed annually. This means you will need to apply for renewal of your license before the current license expires. The process for renewal is similar to the process when you are first granted a Local Minister's License. During the renewal interview, you should be prepared to discuss the progress and growth of your spiritual walk, your call to ministry, your ministry involvement, and the status of your educational preparation. After holding a local license for two years, you may seek renewal of your license only if you have completed at least two courses in a validated Course of Study program (see Manual 529.4).

The District Minister's License

A District Minister's License is the next level of licensing. A district licensed minister has an expanded sphere of ministry and responsibilities in the church (Manual 530.7) and is a member of the clergy rather than a lay member of the local church. For this reason, both the process and the requirements for receiving this license differ from what is involved in obtaining a Local Minister's License. Each District has a board that oversees the credentialing process for the granting of District Licenses and recommendations for ordination. Some districts organize themselves as a single Board of Ministry while other districts divide the responsibilities between two separate boards: the District Ministerial Studies Board, responsible for helping shape lifelong learning

opportunities for all ministers and for guiding those individuals completing the Course of Study; and the District Ministerial Credentials Board, responsible for a variety of duties including recommending individuals for district licensing and for ordination.

Applying for a District Minister's License

You may apply for a district license on the following conditions:

1. You must have held a Local Minister's License for at least one full year;
2. You must have completed at least one-fourth of the required Course of Study through participation in a validated Course of Study program;
3. If you have ever been divorced, the Board of General Superintendents must have granted approval for you to apply for a District Minister's License (further information provided below);
4. Your local church board must recommend to your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards that you be granted a District Minister's License or that your District Minister's License be renewed.

In addition to interviewing candidates for district licenses and ordination, many districts include a broader assessment process, often in the format of an intensive weekend event. The purpose is to help you continue to explore and define your call and to better equip the District to prepare you for a lifetime of effective ministry.

Approach assessment experiences with openness and excitement.

If you believe you have met the first two conditions listed above (and the third, if applicable), have a conversation with your pastor and church board about the possibility of receiving a recommendation for a District Minister's License. Normally, this will involve an interview with your local church board similar to seeking renewal of your Local Minister's License.

Depending on your progress in the Course of Study and evidence of gifts and graces for ministry, the church board may recommend you for a district license. In this case, your pastor should give you an "Application for Minister's License" along with the information you need to submit it in time to participate in the credentialing interviews held annually by your district's Board of Ministry. Normally, interviews are scheduled two to three months before district assembly. If your pastor does not provide the form and information, contact your district office as soon as possible. To find the contact information for your district, select "District" from the menu of the USA/Canada region website (see Nazarene.org).

If the church board decides not to recommend you for a District Minister's License, accept this as a learning opportunity and discuss with your pastor the reasons leading to this decision. This is an important time to be teachable and prayerful, trusting that God is at work in the process. Continuing in the educational process and remaining involved in local church ministry can help you, the pastor, and the church board gain a clearer sense of God's calling and direction on your life.

If you or your spouse have been divorced

If you and/or your spouse have been divorced, it is important to inform your pastor and your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards as early in the process as possible. The reason is that a divorce is a potential impediment to being ordained. If there is a divorce in your background, you and your spouse will be asked to meet with members of the District Board to share your story. You also will be asked to provide some documentation. In the Church of the Nazarene, this is the process through which divorce can be removed as a barrier to ordination (Manual 530.1). The aim of this process is to discern and affirm the healing and restoring work of God in your life.

Through this interview process, the District Board will make a recommendation as to whether or not your divorce should be removed as a barrier to becoming a member of the clergy (district licensing) and to the possibility of eventual ordination. This recommendation will be submitted to the Board of General Superintendents who will make the final determination on the matter. If your spouse has ever been divorced, the process is similar though the District Board will be able to approve the removal of this barrier on the part of the spouse without the need to submit the matter to the Board of General Superintendents. The only exception would be if your spouse is also seeking a District Minister's License, in which case a recommendation to remove divorce as a barrier to becoming a member of the clergy would also have to be submitted to the Board of General Superintendents.

It is important to keep in mind that the Board of General Superintendents meets together on a limited number of occasions each year. It is not unusual for the process of removing divorce as a barrier to ordination to require 6 to 9 months from the time of your interview with your District Board to the time your district superintendent receives notification on the decision reached by the Board of General Superintendents. Be patient and trust the process as you endeavor to answer God's calling upon your life. In the meantime, be sure to keep your Local Minister's License in good standing by seeking its renewal and by completing the required studies.

Once you have received notice that divorce has been lifted as a barrier to your becoming a member of the clergy in the Church of the Nazarene, you may proceed with the district licensing process. Upon the recommendation of the church board where you hold your membership, you will be free to interview for your District Minister's License.

The district interview process

Meeting with the District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards is one of the most important steps in the public journey toward ordination. Once you have an interview time established with the board, make all the arrangements necessary to be there. Approach the interview prayerfully and with seriousness. The board may ask your spouse to participate in your interview for your first District Minister's License. If the board makes such a request (even in subsequent years for renewal of license), you and your spouse need to make every effort to comply.

District boards conduct and structure the interviews for district licensing in a variety of ways. Regardless of the approach and schedule, be prepared for searching questions that cover such important areas as:

- Your understanding and experience of a call to ministry
- Your understanding and experience of entire sanctification
- Your understanding and support of the doctrinal teachings of the Church of the Nazarene
- Your theology of ministry
- Your financial stability and whether indebtedness could limit places where you could be assigned for ministry
- Your willingness to work within the structures of the church
- Your commitment to fulfilling the Great Commission
- The overall health of your personal and family life

Of course, your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards understands you are in a formative season as you gain experience in ministry and in life, and as you complete the required educational preparation. As you move through the process, the depth of the conversation during your annual interview reflects your level of progress.

After the interview

Following the interview, the District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards may recommend to the District Assembly that you be granted a District Minister's License. If you are recommended for licensing, your name will be presented to the District Assembly who then votes on the Board of Ministry recommendations. Upon approval by the district assembly, a license certificate signed by the presiding general superintendent, the district superintendent, and the district secretary, will be issued. Ideally, your pastor will present your license to you during a public worship service.

If the District Board does not recommend that you be granted a District Minister's License, this does not mean you must abandon your preparation for the ministry. It means, rather, that your pastor and local church board will continue to work with you to discern God's leading in your life, and to provide direction and guidance. If you anticipate applying for a District Minister's License in the future, it is important that you continue to hold a Local Minister's License. Work closely with your pastor on these matters. She or he will provide guidance and involve your church board appropriately.

Renewing Your District Minister's License

Just like the Local Minister's License, the District Minister's License must be renewed annually. There is nothing automatic about the process, though you should receive an application form each year. However, if you do not receive an application form at least 90 days prior to your district assembly, contact your district office. You will also want to be in communication with the pastor of the local church where you are a member. The church board must recommend you for renewal of license just as they recommended you for your very first District Minister's License. As part of the renewal process, you will need to provide your District Board with an up-to-date and accurate record of your progress in your educational preparation; preferably, an official transcript. After receiving your first District Minister's License you will be responsible to complete a minimum of two courses per year in a validated Course of Study program to remain eligible for renewal of your district license (Manual 530.3).

To renew your district license, follow the procedure outlined by your district. Make every effort to be available in person for your annual licensing interview, even if you are away. If returning to your home district is extremely difficult, your District Board may offer to help you by scheduling a special meeting with you during one of your academic breaks. In some cases, your district may arrange for you to be interviewed in their behalf by the District Board of the district where you temporarily reside or by a committee of religion faculty and/or pastors where you are attending school.

Opportunities and Obligations

Assessment Events

Many districts require those who hold or who are making their first application for a District Minister's License also attend an assessment event. An assessment event is a gathering designed to help each ministerial candidate increase her or his self-awareness and insight for the purpose of building healthy relationships and establishing essential spiritual formation practices. Most often, spouses are included in these events that may be held on a single day or over an entire weekend.

Normally, there is some preparation required beforehand and the event itself includes times of conversation with resource personnel (such as qualified counselors) as well as sessions that instruct and inspire. These events not only equip you for life and ministry but also give your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards greater understanding of how to come alongside you as you continue your preparation for ordination and a lifetime of ministry.

Reporting annually

Every person who has begun the process of preparing for ministry in the Church of the Nazarene is required to report annually. Those with a Local Minister's License are to report to their local church (529.1). However, those who hold a District Minister's License or who are ordained are members of the clergy and must report to their district assembly each and every year. Your very first report as a district licensed minister is given to the district assembly to which you are recommended for the first renewal of your district license. You will receive a report form from the district secretary. The district secretary is responsible for collecting reports from all members of the clergy on her or his district. Failure to report could jeopardize your standing as a member of the clergy (Manual 537.3).

Communicating with your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards

It is your responsibility to communicate with your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards throughout the process leading to ordination and as long as you have a ministry credential in the Church of the Nazarene (Manual 537.3). Be sure to update your District Board immediately if:

- You change your contact information (email, phone, home address);
- Your marital status changes;
- You accept or change an assigned ministry role (Full time; part time; pastor; associate)

Roles of ministry are discussed in Manual 504-526.1;

- You change your local church membership;
- You relocate to a new district.

If you are district licensed and move to a new district, you will need to transfer your local church membership to a Nazarene church on that district. Exceptions to this guideline may include (1) if the move is considered temporary (such as moving to attend a Nazarene university), or (2) if there is no Nazarene congregation within a reasonable distance of your new place of residence. In this case, the guidance of your district superintendent will be helpful. *Be advised that you are required to update your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards with any change of your contact information* (physical address, mailing address, phone number, email address).

When transferring your local church membership, it is very important to inform your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards of this change as soon as possible. If you are transferring your membership to a local church on another district, you must also request your Board of Ministry to transfer jurisdiction of your ministerial credential (your district license) to your new district. In addition, you are required to provide your contact information to your new district and to let them know you have requested the transfer of your credential.

While the credentialing process is generally the same from district to district, each district is unique in how it carries out that process. So, if you move to a new district, ask about the credentialing process on the new district and inquire about important dates such as when license renewal applications are due and when and where the annual credentialing interviews are held. Of course, you will want to establish a strong relationship with your pastor who can provide guidance and support.

Ministry Experience

In addition to the educational requirements, experience in ministry is an important aspect of the credentialing process. In fact, ordination in the Church of the Nazarene requires experience in ministry that involves a specific, supervised, accountable ministry position. This ministry position does not need to be a paid position though it must be recognized as *assigned ministry*. This means there must be a documentable level of assigned ministry responsibilities and accountability above and beyond lay ministry in a local congregation. The time will be evaluated based on the number of hours per week given to the ministry assignment. This time of assigned ministry can begin while you are completing the Course of Study.

To be eligible for ordination, you must have been an assigned minister on a full-time basis for not less than three consecutive years and, at the time of ordination, you must currently be serving in an assigned ministry. In the case of part-time assignment, you should understand that the consecutive years of in-service time required will be longer, depending on your level of involvement in your ministry assignment (Manual 532.3).

Your district leadership can help you determine how to best connect your ministry involvement to the experience requirements for ordination. Some districts will provide a Ministry Log which can help you track your assigned ministry, but either way, you are encouraged to keep a record of your years of service in assigned ministry and to document that it qualifies as assigned ministry.

Mentoring

Once you are in a ministry position and tracking your experience requirements, you will need mentoring and accountability as you learn the practical aspects of ministry. If your district does not appoint a spiritual/pastoral mentor or mentoring committee for you, you should seek one on your own. It would be best if you could acquire a group of three persons who would meet with you at least once every three months, and at least one of whom would make phone contact with you at least twice monthly. It would be most helpful for you if at least one of the persons was a member of the District Board who would understand the issues of development and formation under consideration at this stage of your ministry preparation.

You should discuss with your mentor or mentoring committee issues of spirituality, spiritual development, transitioning from the idealism of education to the realism of ministry practice, establishing and pursuing a program of lifelong learning, and other matters related to your formation as a minister of the gospel. One arena of development that almost always is overlooked is that of developing a personal financial stewardship plan. This not only involves practicing the habit of tithing but also creating a plan to address any consumer or educational debt as well as take responsible action in planning for retirement.

Learn all you can from conversation with your mentor or mentoring committee during this stage of your development as a minister. Invite the members of your mentoring committee to visit you unannounced at the church where you are serving, during both service and non-service times. Develop a covenantal foundation for feedback, accountability, and evaluation with them. They can be your best advocates in becoming the minister God has called you to be.

◆ Ordination

What is ordination?

The process of preparation in which you engage first as a local minister and then as a district licensed minister, is a journey of candidacy for ordination. Ordination is the authenticating, authorizing act of the church that recognizes and confirms God's call on the lives of women and men to ministerial leadership as stewards and proclaimers of both the gospel and the Church of Jesus Christ.

Ordination is an authenticating act

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. The church is responsible to discern the call of God on a person's life considering both personal testimony to that call and evidence of gifts and graces for ministry. Thus, ordination lies at the end of an authenticating process of one's call.

This process may be challenging at times. However, the church is humbly confident that the discernment exercised during candidacy is crucial to the well-being both of the church and of the candidate.

Ordination is an authorizing act

By means of ordination the church officially approves and authorizes you as one who is worthy of the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of being a member of the clergy. 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 received the grace of God and the gifts necessary for public ministry; that you have a thirst for knowledge, especially knowledge of the Word of God; and that you can communicate the gospel in a way that is clear and doctrinally sound. To be able to make such claims about you, the church must question, probe, and observe you over time – and test you “as by fire,” to use a biblical phrase. The biblical assumption of trial by fire is that you will come through the test with proven character and purity.

Ordination is a confirming act

Ordination is also a confirming act of the church. In the time leading up to ordination, the church is at work evaluating you and your potential for ministry. Local church boards consider whether your

involvement and testimony make it reasonable for them to issue you a Local Minister's License. That same board will consider making recommendation for district licensing. The local church and the District Board will observe you closely to determine if your district license should be renewed each year. When all requirements for ordination have been met, the District Board may recommend you to the district assembly for ordination as an elder or as a deacon. The entire district assembly

will vote whether or not to present your name to the presiding general superintendent. He or she, as representative of the Church of the Nazarene globally, will make the final determination whether you should be ordained. Ordination is truly an act of the entire church.

Ordination is a spiritual and theological act

Ordination is also a spiritual and theological act of the church. It is more than receiving certification to minister. It is more than passing qualifying exams of your profession. It is the church's acknowledgment of the amazing reality that God calls and gifts certain men and women for ministerial leadership in the church. While the church affirms the scriptural tenet of the universal priesthood and ministry of all believers, the act of ordination is the acknowledgment of God's call on certain men and women to leadership in ministry.

Jesus taught that "the greatest among you must become the servant of everyone." Ordination, then, does not convey special status or privilege; rather it recognizes and confirms God's calling upon ministerial leaders to live as servants of the gospel. 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. Your ordination class may well consist of candidates from several races, born in a variety of countries, representing a whole range of economic backgrounds, including both women and men. What all of these persons hold in common is the testimony of a call from God and the church's recognition in each of them of the gifts and graces for ministerial leadership.

Because the candidacy portion of the journey is demanding and requires tremendous investment of your energy and resources, the church tries to determine as early as possible if there are any impediments that might preclude your successful completion of candidacy. For this reason, the church inquires carefully into any criminal activity, sexual misconduct, divorce, indebtedness, or other matters of significance in your life history. Though this may feel awkward or painful at times, it is better to determine early in the process the impact of these issues on your potential for ordination and fruitfulness in ministry in the Church of the Nazarene rather than wait until late into the process of your candidacy.

"Ordination bears witness to the Church universal and the world at large that this candidate reveals a life of holiness, possesses gifts and graces for public ministry, demonstrates a thirst for knowledge, especially for the Word of God, and displays capacity to communicate sound doctrine." Manual ¶502

Ordination is a privilege, not a right

The Church of the Nazarene requires that you complete specific educational preparation and gain a certain level of ministry experience in order to be considered for ordination. In addition, you must currently be district licensed and must also have held a district license for at least three consecutive

years (*Manual* 532.3). However, **completion of the minimum educational, credentialing, and experience requirements does not automatically qualify you for ordination.** Ordination is for a lifetime, and both you and the church as represented by the District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards must be confident in your fitness for ordination, spiritually, theologically, personally, and professionally. Based on their observations and on reports from your congregation, pastor, and district superintendent, the District Board determines your readiness for the next step in the process: the ordination interview.

The ordination interview

When the Board believes you are ready to be interviewed regarding ordination, they will invite you to such an interview. If invited, you will also be asked to complete the “Ordination/Recognition Questionnaire” in advance of the interview. Many of these questions will be familiar to you since they also appear on the “Application for a District Minister’s License” form. Normally, the interview is held well in advance of the district assembly.

The ordination interview itself is similar to the interviews you have experienced in the process of gaining and renewing a District Minister’s License, except this interview is more comprehensive. The District Board must be very confident you are fully qualified and ready to be ordained before they can proceed. If you are married, it will be very important for your spouse to attend this interview. His or her own journey of walking alongside you and engaging meaningfully in the life of the local church is of significant interest to the Board. Note: If, to the best of your knowledge, you have completed all of the requirements but are not invited to interview for ordination, you should follow the usual process for the renewal of your district license, assuming you have received the recommendation of your church board.

During the interview, it is hoped you will be able to perceive the love and concern of your District Board for both you and the church. They carry a heavy responsibility in the decision they will soon make. After the interview you will be dismissed and the District Board will decide whether or not to recommend you to the district assembly and to the general superintendent. Normally, you will be notified of their decision on the same day as your interview.

Affirming, yet challenging

It is hoped this interview process will communicate support and affirmation to you, even though it feels challenging and evaluative. District boards are charged with the responsibility of making sure the church’s ministers are called, well-prepared, and spiritually ready to minister to the people of God and to those who do not yet know Christ. Since this task has such serious, eternal implications, don’t be surprised if the process sometimes seems too intense, too long, too cautious, or too personal. If you have questions about the interview process, before or after the interview, you should talk with your pastor and/or district superintendent. He or she can help you develop perspective on the process.

Should the board, following the interview, decide not to recommend you for ordination at this time, their reasons will normally be communicated to you. Feel free to also ask your pastor, mentor, and/or district superintendent about the board's decision. Once again, this can be an opportunity for growth.

In 1 Timothy 5:22 we find this caution to the Church: "Do not ordain anyone hastily" (NRSV). Therefore, the process leading toward ordination is unapologetically thorough and deliberative.

Recognition of Ordination

If you are currently an ordained minister in another denomination or have been ordained by an independent congregation and wish to serve as an ordained minister in the Church of the Nazarene, you may ask that your existing ordination be recognized. This request may be considered if you have met all requirements for ordination in the Church of the Nazarene as outlined in Manual paragraphs 225, 527.4, 430.2, 530.4. You must demonstrate competency in your understanding of (1) the Nazarene Manual, (2) the history of the Church of the Nazarene, and (3) Wesleyan-holiness theology. If you are invited to interview for recognition of your ordination, you will be examined by the District Board as to your conduct, personal experience spiritually as well as in ministry, and soundness of doctrine. You will be required to complete the "Ordination/Recognition Questionnaire" in advance of the interview.

If recognition of your existing ordination is approved by the district assembly and the presiding general superintendent, you will participate in the ordination service alongside any others who are being ordained. However, since the Church of the Nazarene understands itself to be "a branch of the 'one, holy, universal, and apostolic' church" (Manual, 14) and therefore understands ordination by a Christian community to be ordination for a lifetime, you will not be "re-ordained" to the Christian ministry. Nevertheless, the Church of the Nazarene's recognition of your existing ordination will be acknowledged and affirmed in a meaningful way during the service of ordination. In addition to this, you will also be provided a certificate of ordination from the Church of the Nazarene.

The District Assembly

If the District Board recommends you for ordination, the recommendation will be reported to the district assembly. Once the district assembly votes to adopt the recommendation of the District Board to ordain you, the final decision belongs to the general superintendent presiding over that assembly. Most often, the general superintendent will meet with you and any other ordinands for a short time prior to the ordination service held during the district assembly. Unless there are unusual circumstances or concerns, the general superintendent will usually join with the District Board and district assembly in affirming your readiness for ordination. The time of the ordination service will be announced well in advance of the district assembly.

❖ Lifelong Learning and

Effective Ministry for a Lifetime

The pattern of lifelong learning you began to establish as a district licensed minister (see page 12 of this guide) and incorporating practices that preserve and deepen your health and well-being, spiritually and otherwise, are especially critical now that you have been ordained. Ordination does not signal that your preparation is completed, but that you have laid a strong foundation for strategic and continuing development. After all, your preparation for ordination did not exhaust the wealth of resources available for theologically informed Christian ministry. Though the Bible remains constant, methods of understanding and communicating it are constantly changing; and while the theology of the church changes little, if at all, in a person's lifetime, there is always the need to apply the gospel in a way that effectively engages a changing culture. Meeting this challenge sometimes gives rise to new ways of expressing theological truth. Beyond this, there is a constant need to improve the skills needed for day-to-day ministry. No one ever reaches the point of having learned enough about human beings and their needs! To be a good steward of the ministry to which God has called you requires lifelong engagement in learning, not only to develop skills and understanding, but to establish practices in your personal and family life that keep you healthy and spiritually attentive.

Planning and reporting lifelong learning activity

From the time you complete the Course of Study to the point of your retirement from the ministry, you are to complete at least 20 lifelong learning hours each year. This, in fact, is an important part of your annual report as a minister in the Church of the Nazarene and is your responsibility even if there are seasons when you are between ministry assignments. But more than being something required by the denomination, developing a pattern of lifelong learning is critical to advancing your capacity to keep your preparation for ministry on pace with the changing context and demands of ministry. It is a matter of offering your best to God and to those you serve.

Quality lifelong learning opportunities include conferences for pastors and leaders, seminars and webinars on various aspects of the ministry and on personal and professional growth, and a host of other activities. Many such programs are offered by our Nazarene colleges and universities, the seminary, our districts, and various divisions of the general church. Local hospitals and mental health organizations, and parachurch organizations also offer quality lifelong learning opportunities from time to time.

Ongoing education is critical for mission! Wherever God calls you to serve, you will be a missionary of the gospel. The changing patterns of culture require constant updating of both knowledge and skills in order to establish outposts of the kingdom of God on earth. The very nature of the church's mission calls for lifelong learning.

In the Church of the Nazarene, each minister is responsible for reporting his or her own participation in lifelong learning. This is made possible through the [Lifelong Learning Registry](#), a mobile-friendly, multilingual website developed for Nazarene ministers around the world. Find out how to access the Registry and learn more about how to report your lifelong learning activity on www.Nazarene.org (see Lifelong Learning on the Clergy Resources page). For a summary of essential features of a well-rounded lifelong learning program, read “[Six Best Practices for the Lifelong Learner](#)” also found on that site.

It's a matter of integrity

The Church of the Nazarene understands lifelong learning to be a vital part of the spiritual and professional stewardship of its ordained ministry. Our love for those to whom we minister demands that we become the best we can be in knowledge, skills, and practice. For this reason, as noted earlier, you are required to complete 20 hours of lifelong learning annually. Failure to do so will require that you to meet with your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards. Our District Boards of Ministry make this effort because every Nazarene minister is more effective when serving out of wholeness, love, meaning, and fulfillment. Lifelong learning offers us the opportunity by which we deepen our capacity to minister with energy and effectiveness throughout life.

Nourishing your own soul

While you are continuing to read and study and grow as part of your ongoing professional development, remember always that one of the key elements in caring for the souls of others is caring for your own soul. You will want to make it a priority to develop good habits like taking a day off, keeping the Sabbath (which, for you, may not be Sunday), finding a recreational hobby, investing time with your family, etc.

Hopefully you will learn early in your ministry the value of having a faithful accountability partner with whom you can talk freely about your struggles and frustrations. Many pastors have discovered the wisdom of finding a professional counselor they can go to for both personal and professional advice.

Although you have a servant's heart and look for ways to give your life away for the sake of the gospel, do not give away your health, your marriage, your family, or your relationship with God in the process. A ministry that is effective over a lifetime is a ministry *with* Jesus, not just *for* him. Remember the invitation Jesus gave to his followers: “Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly.” (Matthew 11:29-30, *The Message*)

Now . . . let the journey begin!

Appendix A: Ability Statements

The focus of the educational preparation required of all Nazarene ministers is called "the Course of Study" -- an array of studies and practicums that develop the range of abilities described below. See page 10 of this guide for more information.

CONTENT: 14 Ability Statements

OLD TESTAMENT

CN1 Ability to identify the literary structure, the theological concepts and main storyline of the Old Testament.

CN2 Ability to describe the historical and cultural contexts of the major sections of the Old Testament.

NEW TESTAMENT

CN3 Ability to identify the literary structure, theological concepts and main storyline of the New Testament.

CN4 Ability to describe the historical and cultural contexts of the New Testament including an ability to Biblically affirm pastoral leadership of men and women within the Church.

INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE

CN5 Ability to describe the development of the canon and the historical and theological influences resulting in contemporary translations.

CN6 Ability to exegete a passage of Scripture using contextual, literary, and theological analysis.

THEOLOGY (General)

CN7 Ability to articulate the Nazarene Articles of Faith.

CN8 Ability to demonstrate an understanding of theological reflection, including its sources, its historical development, and its Wesleyan contemporary expressions.

DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS

CN9 Ability to articulate the doctrine of holiness from a Wesleyan perspective.

CHURCH HISTORY

CN10 Ability to tell the story of Christian history and the development of creeds and major doctrines.

CN11 Ability to describe the mission and practice of the Church throughout its history.

THE HISTORY AND POLITY OF THE CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

CN12 Ability to identify the formative influences of the American Holiness Movement and the Church of the Nazarene.

CN13 Ability to identify and explain the significance of the major events, and male and female figures in the Church of the Nazarene.

CN14 Ability to identify the directives of the *Manual* of the Church of the Nazarene that pertain to the organization and ministry of the local, district, and general church.

COMPETENCY: 14 Ability Statements (using one ministry emphasis listed below)

ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

CP1 Ability to communicate publicly through multiple methods (oral, written, media, etc.) with clarity, and creativity, utilizing gender inclusive language.

MANAGEMENT, LEADERSHIP, FINANCE, AND CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

CP2 Ability to oversee ministry using management skills including servant leadership, conflict resolution, administration, and team building.

CP3 Ability to cultivate, cast, and strategically implement vision.

CP4 Ability to lead congregations in the biblical stewardship of life resources.

ANALYTICAL THINKING

CP5 Ability to reason logically for discernment, assessment, and problem solving.

CONGREGATIONAL CARE AND COUNSELING

CP6 Ability to provide pastoral and spiritual care for individuals and families, discerning when referral to professional counseling is required.

EFFECTIVE EVANGELISM AND DISCIPLESHIP

CP7 Ability to lead evangelistically through preaching, modeling and equipping others.

CP8 Ability to lead in discipling and assimilating new converts into the Church.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CP9 Ability to describe and apply knowledge of human development in leading people to Christian maturity.

CP10 Ability to envision and implement Christian education in the local church.

WORSHIP

CP11 Ability to envision, order, and participate in contextualized, theologically grounded worship and to develop and lead appropriate services for special occasions (i.e., wedding, funeral, baptism, and Lord's Supper).

MINISTRY EMPHASIS (Preaching/Chaplain)

CP12 Ability to prepare, and deliver biblically sound sermons using appropriate techniques and skills demonstrating cultural sensitivity.

CP13 Ability to develop sermons in various forms (evangelistic, pastoral care, doctrinal teaching, lectionary, etc.).

CP14 Ability to assess the strengths and weaknesses of current homiletical models in light of enduring theological and contextual perspectives.

MINISTRY EMPHASIS (Christian Education/Children/Youth/Adults)

CP15 Ability to prepare and lead discipleship ministries that are biblically sound, age-appropriate, intergenerational, and culturally sensitive.

CP16 Ability to assess contemporary approaches to ministry in light of enduring theological and contextual perspectives.

MINISTRY EMPHASIS (Compassionate Ministry)

CP17 Ability to prepare and lead compassionate ministries that are biblically sound and culturally sensitive.

CP18 Ability to exegete a community utilizing a Wesleyan paradigm for hospitable engagement.

MINISTRY EMPHASIS (Music)

CP19 Ability to prepare and lead a music ministry that is biblically sound, utilizing appropriate techniques and skills demonstrating cultural sensitivity.

CP20 Ability to assess contemporary approaches to church music in light of enduring theological and contextual perspectives.

MINISTRY EMPHASIS (Administration)

CP21 Ability to manage and implement biblically sound church administration utilizing appropriate techniques and skills demonstrating cultural sensitivity.

CP22 Ability to assess and implement contemporary approaches to administration in light of enduring theological and contextual perspectives.

CHARACTER: 8 Ability Statements

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

CH1 Ability to apply theological and philosophical ethics to nurture faithful living in the Christian community.

CH2 Ability to discern and make ethical decisions in the midst of a complex and/or paradoxical context within a Wesleyan framework

CH3 Ability to practice a moral pastoral leadership, informed by philosophical and theological ethics.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

CH4 Ability to pursue holy character (Christlikeness) by practicing faith formation and the classic Christian disciplines as means of grace.

CH5 Ability to locate, understand, and use resources for individual and corporate spiritual formation.

PERSON OF THE MINISTER

CH6 Ability to articulate his or her call from God to ministry as affirmed by the Church.

CH7 Ability to demonstrate a realistic self-understanding including personal strengths, gifts, weaknesses, and areas of needed growth.

CH8 Ability to practice holistic stewardship (mutual submission in gender relationships, sexual purity, marriage and family, personal finance, professional conduct, practicing Sabbath, etc.).

CONTEXT: 8 Ability Statements

ANTHROPOLOGY AND CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

CX1 Ability to understand, appreciate, and work sensitively with cultures and sub-cultures.

CX2 Ability to identify and apply the principles of cross-cultural communications.

CONTEMPORARY CONTEXT AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

CX3 Ability to discern sociological dynamics, (including the power dynamics of gender, age and ethnicity) and to apply that information to specific ministry settings.

CX4 Ability to analyze and describe congregations and communities.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

CX5 Ability to place the ministry context in light of the large schemes of world and national history.

CX6 Ability to analyze and describe the ministry context in light of its local history.

MISSIONS

CX7 Ability to understand and articulate the biblical, historical, and theological bases for Christian mission.

CX8 Ability to describe basic missiological principles and to apply them to the development of ministry in the local church.

Appendix B:

Registration Form

If your pastor is recommending you for a Local Minister's License, you are encouraged to register your sense of God's calling on your life with your District Ministerial Credentials & Studies Boards. By supplying the information on the Registration of Call to Ministry form, your district will have the information it needs to help guide you in your educational preparation and in the licensing process. Ask your pastor if your district has developed its own registration process. If so, follow that process; If not, you may wish to complete and submit the form on the following page.

REGISTRATION OF CALL TO MINISTRY

Find more information about this form on page 9 of the *Guide to Ministerial Preparation and Ordination*.

Full Name _____

Address _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ E-Mail _____

I am sensing a calling from God to minister in the following area(s):

_____ Sr/Lead Pastor	_____ Youth / College	_____ Educator
_____ Associate	_____ Worship	_____ Other:
_____ Discipleship	_____ Administration	
_____ Children	_____ Military Chaplaincy	=====

My Local pastor is: _____

I am a member of _____ Church of the Nazarene

City _____ State/Province _____

Your Signature _____ Date _____

Complete and send this form to the Sacramento District Office at:
Sacramento District Church of the Nazarene

6235 S. Walnut Street, Suite 200
Loomis, CA 95650
sacdist @sacnaz.org