

1 E. The Process Of Licensing

1. **The District Office**

- a. Sends the candidate a licensing manual containing copies of the Pre-Licensing Interview Guide and a copy of the “Pacific Southwest District Implementation of Church of the Brethren Polity on Licensing and Ordination” and a copy of the Church of the Brethren Code of Ethics for Ministers. The licensing manual shall also include master copies of reporting forms.
- b. Notifies the candidate that the chair of Nurturing and Credentialing Committee (NACC) will contact him or her with the interview date within one month after the Pre-Licensing Interview Guide is completed and returned
 - (1) Pre Licensing interviews and interviews with Lay Speakers occur two times a year. The NACC may schedule additional interviews at its discretion.
 - (2) Candidates who submit materials in a language other than English must allow an additional three weeks so that the district can arrange for translation of the materials. A translation fee will accompany all such applications. Churches are encouraged to help applicants cover this cost.
- c. Sends copies of the Pre-Licensing Interview Guides to the PSWD Executive Minister, Nurturing and Credentialing Committee, interview committee and to the Ministry Commission of the District. All documents should not be reproduced and must be returned to the district office.
- d. Creates a confidential file on the candidate. Contents of this file should not be reproduced without the written consent of the candidate and authorization of the District Board.
- e. Will inform the candidate about being processed through a professional psychological assessment for Ministry Readiness Evaluation*. (As per PSWD contract with R. Scott Sullender, Ph.D. of the Samaritan Counseling Center). Persons who have had their license terminated or lapsed will need to be processed through this policy to activate their license. The district is responsible for paying 2/3rd of the cost and the individual or local congregation will cover 1/3rd of cost for this service. (*This is in light of National Readiness Ministry Program guidelines recommended by Church of the Brethren, National Ministry Office and Council of District Executives.)
- f. Following the interview sends to district ministry commission and the chair of Nurturing & Credentialing Committee copies of recommendations from the interview committee.

2. **The District Ministry Commission:** delegates the duties of oversight of licensing to its Nurturing and Credentialing Commission. The district ministry commission receives the recommendation of its Nurturing and Credentialing Committee with the duty to act upon its recommendation. It may invite the chair of the interview committee to its meeting along with other relevant persons.

3. **The Nurturing and Credentialing Committee**

- a. Shall meet for the purpose of reviewing the candidate and mentor’s progress reports, evaluate each candidate’s progress and prepare a recommendation report to the (NACC) Ministry Commission.

- 1 b. Shall meet prior to the District Board of Administration's meetings to interview candidates
2 and prepare recommendations to the Ministry Commission.
3
- 4 c. Shall in consultation with the district Executive Minister contact candidates to be licensed
5 with the date, place and time of examination.
6
- 7 d. Shall establish an interview committee to consist of at least five members drawn from the
8 NACC and the Ministry Commission. The committee should include a representative of the
9 candidate's congregation. The interview committee should include both men and women.
10 The District Executive Minister, the chair of the District Ministry Commission and the chair
11 of District Board of Directors are ex-officio and are welcome at all interviews.
12
- 13 (1) The interview committee shall meet prior to the interview to review procedure and note
14 possible themes; (If the NACC chair is unable to conduct the interview, the committee
15 will appoint a chairperson.)
16
- 17 (2) The established committee shall conduct the interview. The interviewers will be open
18 to review any written material as well as asking additional oral questions.
19
- 20 (3) The interview should include these subject areas about the candidate:
21 • his or her aims for the ministry
22 • natural ability
23 • moral and spiritual fitness
24 • willingness to prepare for the duties of ministry
25
- 26 (4) The interview shall include the following ethics questions:
27 • from the Church of the Brethren Code of Ethics for Ministers, are there any
28 parts you wish to discuss with the interview committee?
29 • Do you agree to abide by this Code?
30 • Have you ever been involved with or charged with ethical misconduct at any
31 time, or if charged, have you been cleared of such charges or achieved
32 reconciliation?
33
- 34 (5) The interview should include questions about Church of the Brethren Core Values.
35
- 36 (6) Shall, following the interview, excuse the candidate so that the committee can
37 deliberate and make its recommendation(s).
38
- 39 (7) Shall inform the candidate of the recommendation by letter within seven days. The
40 chair may verbally inform the candidate prior to writing the letter.
41
- 42 (8) Shall send the signed original interview guide and recommendations to the district
43 office to be sent to the district ministry commission for action.
44

45 **F. The Licensing Service**

46 Upon approval of the district ministry commission and the congregation of the candidate, a
47 representative of the district ministry commission shall license him or her in the congregation,
48 preferably during a Sunday morning worship service, after consultation with the candidate and the
49 local pastor. At this time the licensed minister shall receive a licensing certificate, a certification card
50 and a copy of "For All Who Minister" or its equivalent/successor.
51

52 **G. Term Of Service**

53 The term of license shall be for the current year, with all expirations being December 31 of each year.
54 The license may be renewed annually at the initiative of the district ministry commission and after

1 consultation with the licensed minister and his or her church board. Licensed ministers who show no
2 inclination to pursue the requirements for ordination shall not be re-licensed. The license may be
3 terminated at the initiative of the licensed minister, the congregation, or the district ministry
4 commission, if satisfactory progress is not being made in fulfilling the purpose.

5 6 **H. Support Systems For Licensed Ministers**

7 8 **1. The congregation**

9 The congregation, through its executive committee or commission charged with ministerial
10 concerns, in consultation with the pastor, can be helpful in the following ways:

- 11 a. Provide a mentor for the licensee from the local community with the approval of the
12 Nurturing and Credentialing Committee.
- 13 b. Provide ample opportunity for the licensed minister to participate in a wide variety of
14 meaningful congregational activities under the guidance of the pastor.
- 15 c. Give encouragement to him or her for adequate educational preparation for the set-apart
16 ministry with the earning of college and seminary degrees being the objective.
- 17 d. Be alert to the financial needs of the licensed minister in his or her educational preparation
18 by assistance in securing grants or loans. Congregations should consider making funds
19 available to licensed ministers for their education.
- 20 e. Arrange for the licensed minister to attend at least one meeting annually of the executive
21 committee or commission related to ministerial concerns for mutual sharing and dialogue.

22 23 24 25 26 27 28 **2. The district will**

- 29 a. Establish ongoing contact with the licensed minister by appointing a mentor (who may be
30 his or her pastor) for mutual sharing of activities and concerns. The mentor and licensee
31 shall file annual progress reports with the NACC. In light of this contact and regular sharing
32 with the NACC, judgment can be made regarding the licensed minister's progress toward
33 ordination.
 - 34 b. Make financial assistance available to the licensed ministers for educational preparation.
 - 35 c. Be responsible for an annual consultation with the licensed ministers and make
36 recommendations to re-license or, if necessary, to terminate the license.
 - 37 d. Counsel the licensed minister concerning his or her educational program.
 - 38 e. Should the licensed minister move his or her membership to another congregation in another
39 district, the sending congregation and the district ministry commission shall inform the new
40 congregation and new district office of that person's ministerial standing. The new
41 congregation and new district's ministry commission may decide to re-license or not to re-
42 license and must be in agreement to do so.
 - 43 f. Maintain a confidential file on each licensed minister and pass it to a new district if there is
44 a move.
 - 45 g. Reports to denominational headquarters the names of anyone licensed or ordained by the
46 district at the time the event occurs and annually updates the district ministerial list for the
47 denominational directory.
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The Ordained Ministry

A. Authority and responsibility for ordaining

(Please refer to the “Ministerial Leadership” paper adopted by Annual Conference in 1999.)

B. Authority of the Ordained Minister

(Please refer to the “Ministerial Leadership” paper adopted by Annual Conference in 1999.)

C. Requirements for Ordination

In addition to the “Ministerial Leadership” paper adopted by Annual Conference in 1999, the PSWD requires the following:

1. Satisfactory fulfillment of scriptural qualifications in the opinion of the district and his or her congregation. Such scriptures include:
 - Matthew 10:1, 16, 27; 28:19-20
 - John 15:5, 12
 - I Corinthians 12:4-11, 27-28; 13:4-13; 14:33
 - II Corinthians 2:17; 5:16-6:1
 - Philippians 2:2-4; 4:1-3, 17
 - I Timothy
2. Other qualities include:
 - a. One or more spiritual gifts; i.e., preaching, service, teaching, administration, faith, love, healing and discernment;
 - b. Deep commitment to Christ and the Church of the Brethren;
 - c. Leadership ability;
 - d. Respect and honor for the decision-making processes within the congregation.
 - e. Ability and will to work in harmony with others.
 - f. Passion for ministry.
3. Educational preparation:
 - a. M. Div. at Bethany Theological Seminary, or
 - b. M. Div. at another approved seminary and completion of a Ministry approved course pertaining to Brethren doctrine and history and the study of the Manual of Organization and Polity, or Ministry training program administered by CBS (Center for Brethren Studies) of PSWD and approved by the ACTS (Academy of Certified Training Systems).
 - c. An exceptional educational track and/or a specialized ministry educational training track approved by Nurturing and Credentialing Committee and District Ministry Commission.
4. Demonstrated leadership ability and maturity of judgment.
5. Evidence of a thorough knowledge of the history, beliefs, practices and polity of the Church of the Brethren.
6. A willingness to teach and uphold the beliefs, practices and policies of the Church of the Brethren, including the policies of ordination for the Church of the Brethren, through a verbal commitment in interviews and a public commitment at the time of ordination.

- 1 7. Written acceptance of the ordination polity and policies of the Church of the Brethren in
2 completing the “Pre-Ordination Interview Guide.”
3
- 4 8. Examination for ordination
5
- 6 9. Licensing by the Church of the Brethren for at least one year prior to ordination examination.
7
- 8 10. Completion of the professional psychological assessment approved by the District Ministry
9 Commission for Ministry Readiness Evaluation. (See page 2 under licensing: E. 1.e).
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11 **D. Process of Ordination**

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13 In addition to the “Ministerial Leadership” paper adopted by Annual Conference in 1999, the PSWD
14 requires the following:
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- 16 1. Nurturing and Credentialing Committee shall supervise the nurture of each licensed candidate in
17 accord with approved procedures and direct each candidate toward fulfillment of the requirements
18 of ordination.
19
- 20 2. All relevant materials from the requirements for ordination shall be submitted to the district office
21 at least three weeks before examination.
22
- 23 3. Pre-ordination examination: The district Ministry Commission through the Nurturing and
24 Credentialing Committee shall organize for the licensed minister a personal interview as he or she
25 nears the completion of requirements for ordination.
26
 - 27 a. The “Pre-ordination Interview Guide” will be used to determine in part the candidate’s
28 growth and development since licensing.
29
 - 30 b. Each candidate will receive the “PSWD Church of the Brethren Pre-Ordination Exam” (see
31 last page in this document), the answers to which will be submitted to the district office four
32 weeks before his or her examination. Candidates who submit materials in a language other
33 than English must allow an additional three weeks so that the district can arrange for
34 translation of the materials. A translation fee will accompany all such applications. Churches
35 are encouraged to help applicants cover this cost.
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 - 37 c. Each candidate will also be sent for study a copy of the Church of the Brethren Code of
38 Ethics for Ministers.
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40 **E. Examination procedures**

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- 42 1. The district office shall:
 - 43 a. Send and receive both the “Pre-Ordination Interview Guide” and the “PSWD Church of the
44 Brethren Pre-Ordination Exam.” Candidates for ordination must submit all written materials
45 to the district office three weeks before their interview date. The district office will notify
46 candidates of this deadline date.
47 Candidates who submit materials in a language other than English must allow an
48 additional three weeks so that the district can arrange for translation of the materials. A
49 translation fee will accompany all such applications. Churches are encouraged to help
50 applicants cover this cost.
51
 - 52 b. Respond to the candidate, explaining the time-line and procedures and given a copy of the
53 Pacific Southwest District Policy on Ordination.
54
 - 55 c. Request and receive transcripts and recommendations; verify them; send copies to the
56 interview chair. Candidates must have complete post-high school transcripts and three letters
57 of recommendation sent directly from their originating source to the district office.

- 1 d. Copies of the Pre-Ordination and Reception of Ordination Interview Guides and Pre-
2 Ordination written exams will be provided to the PSWD Executive Minister, Nurturing and
3 Credentialing Committee, Ministry Commission and, upon request, to the District Board. All
4 documents are retained by the district and may not be reproduced.
5
- 6 e. Pre-Ordination and Lay Speaker Interview guides and related papers are officially private
7 information.
8
- 9 f. Following the interview, send to district Ministry Commission and the chair of Nurturing
10 & Credentialing Committee copies of recommendations from the interview committee.
11
- 12 g. Maintain a file of all recommendations, open only to authorized persons, including the
13 candidate.
14
- 15 h. Following action by the district board, notify the candidate, and the congregation where the
16 candidate holds membership by letter, of the decision of the board.
17
- 18 i. Report the ordination to denominational headquarters at the time the service occurs and
19 annually update the district ministerial list for the denominational directory.
20
- 21 2. The Nurturing and Credentialing Committee shall:
- 22 a. Establish an Ordination interview committee.
23
- 24 b. Authorize its chair to name an interview chair from the members of the Ordination Interview
25 Committee.
26
- 27 3. The chair of the ordination interview committee shall:
- 28 a. In consultation with the District Executive Minister, inform the candidate of the date, place,
29 and time of examination.
30
- 31 b. Convene the Interview Committee and moderate the interview process, within the following
32 four guidelines:
33
- 34 (1) The Interview Committee for ordination and reception of ordination candidates shall
35 consist of a minimum of seven members, not to exceed ten members, from the
36 following list of people:
- 37 — the members of the Nurturing & Credentialing Committee,
38 — one representative of the congregation recommending the candidate,
39 — the chair, PSWD Board of Administration,
40 — the chair, PSWD Ministry Commission,
41 — the other members of the PSWD Ministry Commission,
42 — the PSWD Moderator,
43 — the PSWD Executive Minister/s.
44
- 45 (2) The Interview Committee shall be a fair demographic representation of our district.
46
- 47 (3) All Pre-Ordination and Reception of Ordination interviews should be conducted at the
48 District Office preceding the winter and summer meetings of the District Board of
49 Administration.
50
- 51 (4) The District Ministry Commission will take responsibility for securing a translator if
52 one is required.
- 53 c. Have the committee meet prior to the interview to review procedure and note possible
54 themes.
55

- d. Conduct the examination. The interviewers will be open to review any written material as well as asking additional oral questions.
 - e. Excuse the candidate after the interview so that the committee can deliberate and make its recommendation(s).
 - f. Inform the candidate of the recommendation by letter within seven days. The chair may verbally inform the candidate prior to writing the letter.
 - g. Send the signed original Interview Guide and recommendations to the district office to be sent to district ministry commission and a copy to the chair of Nurturing & Credentialing Committee.
 - h. May meet with the district ministry commission if invited to do so by its chair.
4. When the district ministry commission has considered the recommendation of the interview committee and determined that the licensed minister has met the requirements for ordination, the commission shall recommend to the district board that he or she be ordained upon the receipt of a call.
 5. The Ordination Policy of PSWD is that there be a simple majority in the Ministry Commission and a three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) majority vote by a qualified quorum ($\frac{2}{3}$) of the District Board to ordain a candidate.
 6. If the district board approves the recommendation of ordination, within one week the District Executive Minister shall present information of the board's action to the candidate, with a copy to the congregation where the candidate holds membership.
 7. Before ordination is granted, approval by the congregational business meeting shall require a majority vote. The congregation's clerk shall notify the district office of the results of the vote.
 8. If the congregation approves the recommendation for ordination, the person shall be ordained to the set-apart ministry, following the receipt of a call. The District Executive Minister, candidate, pastor and representative of district ministry commission shall mutually agree upon the date and arrangements for the service of ordination. The initiation of planning is the responsibility of the District Executive Minister. The service shall include the laying on of hands, preferably during a Sunday morning worship service.

Pacific Southwest District Church of the Brethren Pre-Ordination Exam

(This is in addition to the Pre-Ordination Interview Guide)

Please submit a typed response: Retype each question followed by your answer.**

Send completed response to: Pacific Southwest District Office, P.O. Box 219, La Verne, CA 91750-0219

A. Biblical Understanding

1. Write a brief (300-500 word) exegesis of one of the passages from each of the lists below:

List 1		List 2	
Genesis 15:1-21	Psalms 23	Matthew 5:17-30	Matthew 26:26-35
Genesis 22:1-19	Isaiah 53	Mark 6:34-44	Luke 6:17-38
Exodus 3:1-16	Micah 6:6-8	John 1:1-18	John 13:1-20, 31-35
I Kings 18:17-40		I Corinthians 1:4 – 2:5	I Corinthians 13:1-13
		Hebrews 4:14 – 5:14	Revelation 4 – 5

2. Define and discuss briefly (100 words or less), using biblical references where appropriate, what you understand by the following terms: Choose Five (5) from the Seven (7).

1. Sin

4. Justice

6. Repentance

2. New Life in Christ

5. Justification

7. Evangelism

3. Service

B. Brethren Doctrine and Practice: Discuss your understanding of the following areas of Brethren doctrine and practice: Choose Five (5) from the Eight (8). You are encouraged to use Biblical references, if you desire. (longer is not necessarily better)

1. Baptism

5. Simple life

7. Love feast and feet

2. Anointing with oil

6. Peace and

washing

3. Child dedication

reconciliation

8. Laying on of hands

4. Eucharist

C. Christian Education: Discuss your philosophy of Christian Education.

D. Administration What do you feel are the major administrative tasks for which a pastor should assume responsibility in most congregations?

E. Polity: The Church of the Brethren Manual of Organization and Polity states: **“Authority is held accountable within the community, which in turn diligently seeks the “mind of Christ” in study of the Scriptures, in dialogue with brothers and sisters, and in openness to the leading of the Holy Spirit.”**

This being true, briefly discuss the nature of pastoral authority.

**** Translation Requests:**

Candidates who submit materials in a language other than English must allow an additional three weeks so that the district can arrange for translation of the materials. A translation fee will accompany all such applications. Churches are encouraged to help applicants cover this cost.

**** PSWD Confidentiality Policy:**

Copies of the Pre-Licensing, Pre-Ordination, Reception of Ordination Interview Guides and PSWD Church of the Brethren Pre-Ordination Exam, will be provided to the PSWD Executive Minister/s. Nurturing and Credentialing Committee, Interview Committee and, upon request to the District Board. All documents are retained by the district and may not be reproduced. All of the above documents are officially private information.