

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

PRE-ORDINATION INTERVIEW GUIDE

Name _____ Date _____
Last First Middle

I. PRE-ORDINATION

It is the responsibility of the District Ministry Commission and representatives of the church board to consult with the licensed minister in a personal interview as she or he nears the completion of requirements for ordination. The Pre-Ordination Interview Guide is one form that may be used to ascertain the candidate's growth and development since licensing.

II. THE INTERVIEW

- A. The District Ministry Commission, acting on behalf of the District Board, is responsible for guiding the pre-ordination process. This document and related papers may be reproduced only for deliberation by the commission and/or its interview committee. Pertinent information can be shared with the District Board when the candidate is presented to the District Board for vote.
- B. The candidate fills out the interview guide and returns it to the District Ministry Commission before the interview.
- C. The District Ministry Commission or its interview committee will use the interview guide as a starting point for exploring in depth the candidate's spiritual, educational, and personal growth; style of leadership; and competence in integrating central themes of the Christian faith with the current concerns of the church and the world; commitment to the Church of the Brethren; and overall readiness for ministry.
- D. The District Ministry Commission is free to ask for additional materials that will assist them in the ordination process. These materials could include transcripts, a physical examination, Readiness for Ministry testing, etc. Sufficient lead time should be allowed for these materials to be available before the interview.
- E. If the candidate is married, the spouse should be invited to join the interview.

III. FOLLOWING THE INTERVIEW

- A. In evaluating a candidate's readiness for ordination, the District Ministry Commission or its interview committee, in addition to their past knowledge of the candidate and the

interview, should seek the judgment and counsel of others - pastors, professors, employers - who have had extensive recent contact with the candidate.

- B.** The District Ministry Commission will take its recommendation for ordination to the District Board for action and to the congregation for confirmation of the board's action.
- C.** The original document and related papers are to be retained in the ordained minister's permanent confidential file in the district office, and all copies are to be destroyed by the District Executive¹ at the conclusion of the pre-ordination process. The permanent confidential file is open only to the minister and the District Executive.

IV. NOTES TO THE CANDIDATE

- A.** The questions in this guide are asked so that you can provide written responses in preparation for the interview with the District Ministry Commission or its interview committee. If more space is needed, use the additional information sheets at the end of the guide.
- B.** If you move to a congregation in another district, your permanent file will be forwarded to the District Executive in that district following the transfer of your membership to a Church of the Brethren congregation in the new district.
- C.** The Readiness for Ministry (RfM) process has been affirmed by the Council of District Executives, the Ministry Advisory Council, and the Office of Ministry. Districts are encouraged to embrace the entire process, which includes the use of assessment tools prior to licensing, the approval of a ministerial education program during the licensing period, and the use of the eleven (11) ministerial competencies criteria during the pre-ordination interview. The criteria are included in this guide, and you will need to respond to each one on the additional information sheets at the end of the guide.

Approved by the Parish Ministries Commission in consultation with the Council of District Executives, 6/1997. Revised by the Office of Ministry 1/2000 and 9/2001 after consultation with the Council of District Executives.

Office of Ministry
Church of the Brethren General Board
1451 Dundee Avenue
Elgin, Illinois 60120-1694

1. The term "District Executive" is used in this paper to refer to a variety of titles used by districts to identify their executive staff.

PRE-ORDINATION INTERVIEW GUIDE

Date _____

PERSONAL DATA

Name _____
Last First Middle

U.S. citizen ___ Yes ___ No
(If no, explain on an additional
information sheet at the end of
the guide.)

Address _____
Street, Box City/Town State Zip

Home phone (____) _____ Office phone (____) _____

E-mail _____ Fax (____) _____

Membership is in _____ Congregation _____ District

Licensing congregation/district (if different from above)

Date of birth: Month _____ Day _____ Year _____

Marital status: Single ___ Married ___ Widowed ___ Divorced ___

If married, spouse's name _____

Spouse's congregation _____

Names/ages of children _____

EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION

Indicate in the following categories the educational preparation agreed upon by you and the District Ministry Commission.

1. If you have graduated, or soon will graduate, from seminary, indicate:

Seminary _____

Address _____

Date of graduation _____ Degree received _____

Name _____

2. If you have completed, or soon will complete, the Training in Ministry program (TRIM), indicate the college(s) and or seminary where work was done:

College and/or seminary _____

Address _____

Date of completion _____ District Coordinator _____

3. If you have completed, or soon will complete, Education for Shared Ministry (EFSM), indicate the district and congregation where the training occurred:

District _____ Congregation _____

Date of completion _____

4. If you have completed, or soon will complete, another certificate training program, is that program within an Academy Certified Training System (ACTS)?

Certificate Program _____ ACTS ___ Yes ___ No

Date of completion _____

READINESS FOR MINISTRY (RfM) PROCESS

1. Did you participate in the Readiness for Ministry process as a licensed minister?

___ Yes ___ No

If yes, the name of the district: _____

Was a copy of the RfM evaluator's summary placed in your ministerial file?

___ Yes ___ No

2. A detailed description of the eleven (11) criteria for "ministerial competencies" is in the *Ministerial Leadership Manual* (pages OM230.6 - OM230.9).

DEVELOPMENT IN MINISTRY

The period of licensing to the ministry is a time of preparation and testing, leading toward ordination. In light of that understanding, answer the following questions. (If you need more space, use the additional information sheets at the end of the guide.)

1. What changes in your development in ministry have occurred? _____

Were there pleasant surprises? _____

Were there problems that could hinder your ministry? _____

Name _____

2. What is your understanding of ordination?

3. For what ministry are you seeking ordination?

____ Pastor ____ Christian Education ____ Youth Ministry
____ Overseas Ministry ____ Teaching ____ Administration
____ Chaplaincy ____ Service Ministry ____ Ecumenical Ministry
____ Special ministry (please specify) _____

4. Indicate your ability and interest in the areas listed:

	Ability			Interest		
	High	Avg.	Low	High	Avg.	Low
Preaching	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Worship	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Teaching	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Pastoral care, including visitation	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Counseling	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Evangelism	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Administration	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Working with groups	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Relating to other denominations	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Working with community agencies	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Disciplined study	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Support groups	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. Describe your experience with and relationship to the congregation where you are currently licensed. _____

MINISTERIAL COMPETENCIES

Questions based on areas of ministerial competencies (use the additional information sheets at the end of this guide for your responses):

1. The Bible bears witness to God's deeds and guides the church in its quest to live as God's people. How will you relate to and use the scriptures in your ministerial role?

2. The story of God's people, which begins in scripture, continues on in the life and history of the church across the centuries. Name and describe several significant events in the history of the church where God's people responded faithfully and unfaithfully.

Name _____

3. Christians have one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. But the way they confess and practice their faith differs widely from age to age, from place to place, and from one society to another. How do you feel about other Christian faith traditions - Protestants, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox - and how will you relate to the other faith traditions in your ministry?
4. Within the wider Christian story, Brethren are one of the several groups who share a heritage known as the believers' church tradition. What is your understanding of that tradition? Name and describe the rites and ordinances and their importance to you and the church.
5. As Christians, we celebrate the good news of God's love for us in Jesus Christ. What is your understanding of that good news? How does Jesus Christ impact your life? the life of the church? How does the good news challenge the dominant culture of our time?
6. The life of faith is a life in community, and the place where we experience community with other believers on an ongoing basis is the congregation. Name and describe several biblical images of community (the church), and reflect on how you will use those images as a ministerial leader.
7. Central to our understanding of ministry is the belief that ministry is not simply an occupation, but rather a vocation. Describe your call to the ministry and your journey of faith since then. What's the difference between occupation and vocation?
8. The life of faith is more than believing and doing; it is an unending process of spiritual formation and transformation. Name and describe several of your personal spiritual disciplines. What plans do you have for continuing professional growth, especially in the area of spiritual formation and transformation?
9. Healthy congregations are places where people know how to relate to one another in constructive ways, even in the midst of conflict and controversy. Name and describe several mediation skills that will assist you in dealing with conflict.
10. The quality of leadership frequently determines whether a group will be able to carry out its mission. Describe yourself as a ministerial leader from biblical, theological, and sociological perspectives. How will you lead in business meetings, worship, pastoral care, and as a teacher?
11. Understanding that is not embodied in practice is worthless. Practice that is not guided by understanding is shallow. How will you communicate the good news of Jesus Christ to the people in the pew without sacrificing your integrity as an educated ministerial leader? Give an example of a situation in which new understandings of scholarship and heritage have become integrated with practice in ministry.

Name _____

ISSUES YOU WOULD LIKE TO DISCUSS WITH THE DISTRICT MINISTRY COMMISSION

MINISTERIAL ETHICS

1. I have read the current "Ethics in Ministry" paper and accept its requirements and procedures.

___ Yes ___ No

2. I have read the current "Ministerial Leadership" paper.

___ Yes ___ No

3. Have you ever been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor other than traffic offenses?

___ Yes ___ No

If yes, describe the circumstances (if more space is needed, use the additional information sheets at the end of the guide): _____

4. Has a formal complaint of sexual misconduct, as described in the current "Ethics in Ministry Relations" paper, ever been filed against you by an ecclesiastical or secular group?

___ Yes ___ No

If yes, describe the circumstances (if more space is needed, use the additional information sheets at the end of the guide): _____

5. If I am ordained, I will accept the guidance and discipline of the district and denomination.

___ Yes ___ No

Signature _____ Date _____

Name _____

SPACES BELOW TO BE COMPLETED BY DISTRICT REPRESENTATIVES

Recommendation of interviewers (if other than the District Ministry Commission):

Interviewers: _____

Date: _____

Recommendation of District Ministry Commission (this section must be signed by the chair and secretary, or by two other commission members designated by the chair):

Signed: _____
Ministry Commission chair Ministry Commission secretary

Date: _____

District Board action (this section must be signed by the chair, or another member of the board designated by the chair):

Signature: _____ Date: _____
District Board chair

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