

Ministry Commission Report

Ministry Commission:

Tom Hostetler, chair
Cindy Slaughter, vice-chair
Nelda Clarke
Lois Frantz
Clark Youngblood
Barbara Ober (*appointed*)

ex-officio members: District Executive Minister;
Moderator; Board Chair

The Ministry Commission has worked hard to implement what Annual Conference sees as the process one uses to move from a person discerning a call to ministry to licensed minister, and then, from licensed minister to 2 other more permanent forms of ministry - commissioned and ordained. [We thought you should be up to date and informed about this, because this is the process that we'll be using in our district.]

So let's say that Lou Becker (just to make up a name) from the Mountain Vista COB (also made up) senses a call, or Lou's pastor is inviting Lou to consider ministry and Lou is willing to think and pray about that. Lou has a congregational connection - Lou's pastor or ministry team with whom Lou talks and prays. Maybe the District Executive or someone from the Nurture and Credentialing Committee talks to Lou about the call. And Lou is willing to form a group - a cohort group - that will meet 4 times to study and pray, and explore the call to ministry. The calling cohort consists of a mentor appointed by the district, a congregational representative and someone Lou wants to be a part of the group - a friend or peer or counselor. Together, with the cohort, Lou either decides that God is not calling toward ministry as a vocation, OR discerns that this is the way forward. The Calling Cohort, together with Lou, develops a plan for moving forward, called the Covenant of Accountability, which the congregation reviews, as well as the District.

This leads to an interview with the Nurture and Credentialing Committee (we just call it the NACC) who uses a number of tools to discern Lou's gifts and calling, and recommends Lou to the Licensed Ministry. As it always has, it includes some form of ministry training (seminary, TRIM, or SeBAH), engagement in spiritual practices; Lou continues to meet with a Cohort - all of which is designed to help Lou continue to discern how God is calling to a vocational ministry. This will take a number of years in most cases.

When that phase is finished, and the educational requirements are complete, Lou has another interview with the NACC, as an applicant to become either an

Ordained Minister or a Commissioned Minister.

Commissioned Minister is a new term, a new category. A Commissioned Minister is one called to a very specific ministry in one very specific setting. For those choosing this option, they would serve as the pastor or music minister or camp director or chaplain in one place - one church, one camp, one retirement home, for as long as he or she is there. But the Commissioned Minister does not transfer from one setting to another. This new credential recognizes the long tradition of the Church of the Brethren that has encouraged the practice of calling out those within the congregation to lead, and also provides a way to recognize persons who are called from outside our tradition to serve in one particular congregation. The expectations of the Commissioned Minister is similar in every other way to that of the Ordained Ministry.

Lou may decide, as the other option, to apply to become an Ordained Minister, called to serve the larger church, where Lou may serve multiple congregations in possibly different districts, or in district or denominational capacities over Lou's lifetime. And, of course, this category is the one we are already mostly familiar with. It has its own set of approved educational programs; and the credentials of the Ordained Minister are recognized throughout the denomination. The Ministry Leadership Paper also makes one change, and that is that the Ordained Minister will now meet regularly with a mentor, and serve as a mentor to others - which most of our Ministers do, but we will be working in our district to get more serious about this whole support and encouragement business.

So, Lou, as the Licensed Minister goes through all the requirements and, together with the Cohort decides on a path to either Commissioned or Ordained Ministry; Lou has an interview with the NACC, which makes a recommendation to the District Ministry Commission, which then recommends to the Executive Board. If all approve, the local congregation affirms this decision through a final vote, and if the vote is positive, then there is a Service of Commissioning or a Service of Ordination for Lou.

And then, the real fun begins. Ministry. After nearly 40 years in ministry, I've seen and done about all there is. And I've loved it all. So if there's one thing I still want to do with the time I have left, it's to encourage my sisters and brothers who are considering, training for and participating in ministry. This life is not always easy - on our spirits, or our families or pocketbooks. But it is rewarding. In my view, it's the most rewarding thing a person can do with their life. So my hat is off to those in all levels of ministry. We need

them. The world needs them. They are the ones who stand in the breach in all the broken places of life. And they deserve our applause.

Every 5 years the District reviews the ordination credentials of our ministers as a way for everyone to keep current on ethical issues, continuing education and activity in ministry. The District provides training (Ethics Training, seminars and workshops for CEU's (Continuing Education Units – which are required), sabbath (through the Pastors and Spouses Retreat) and support (through the District Executive). These are great methods for maintaining and attracting ministers!

But the congregation must take an active role in supplying funds for continuing education, adequate time for rest and recreation, regular sabbaticals, prayer, encouragement for the minister's emotional and spiritual needs (as with a therapist or spiritual director), a realistic job description, and fair and adequate compensation. Every congregation should find or invent ways to support, care for and encourage their ministers. I hope every delegate will make it a part of their responsibility to ask how these things are being done in their congregation.

Tom Hostetler, Chair
PSWD Ministry Commission

The Ministry Commission extends our gratitude to those appointed by our commission:

<p>NACC: Nurturing & Credentialing Committee: 2016 Don Shankster, Chair 2017 John Price x2018 Peggy Redman 2019 John Katonah 2020 Susan Boyer Ex-Officio: Ministry Commission Chair, District Moderator, District Board Chair, District Executive Minister</p>
<p>Mentor Overseer: John Price</p>
<p>TRIM / SeBAH Coordinator: Jim Martinez</p>

NACC: Nurturing & Credentialing Committee

The arm of assistance for the Ministry Commission, NACC provides guidance and legwork in the licensing and ordination process for the Pacific Southwest District. With the implementation of the recently passed Guidelines for Ministerial Leadership, we are looking forward to some of the changes in our process. One area that ministers will note is the procurement of a “calling cohort” to give guidance, feedback, and support in the early stages of discerning whether or not a call to ministry is for them, in planning a strategy of education, and offering guidance during the education. The

intent is for these cohort groups to continue to follow and support the minister throughout their ministry.

Our Fall meetings include interviews for those entering the licensed ministry, interviews of those who have completed their training and are ready to receive a call to ministry - ready for ordination, and the annual progress review of all licensed ministers in their movement towards ordination, especially their education.

Our Spring meeting this year included two interviews for ordination - Erik Brummett who has been called to serve the Live Oak congregation and Angela Asomoah who has completed her studies and is waiting for a call. One other interview was with Joshua Longbrake, for licensing as he joins the Church of the Brethren, serving as an associate pastor at Circle of Peace.

We also gave some guidance in changing the annual review reporting forms for licensed ministers to reflect the new requirement of cohort groups. It is exciting to witness the interest and passion of those seeking to serve our Christ in his church, to share in their journeys toward ministry and to experience hope for the leadership of our district.

In Christ,
Don Shankster, NACC Chair

TRIM: Training in Ministry
SeBAH: Seminario Bíblico Anabautista Hispano
Hispanic Anabaptist Seminary

It is a pleasure to report the progress of PSWD's Training in Ministry students and their counter parts, Seminario Bíblico Anabautista Hispano students for the 2015-2016 year. They continue their studies to be certified as TRIM or SeBAH educated. TRIM students pursue training in three subject areas: Bible and Theology, Ministry Skills, and General Education. One of our current students has completed her TRIM work this past year. Congratulations to Dawna Welch! TRIM is intended as an entry level for those interested in leadership roles or those working towards ministry accreditation in the Church of the Brethren. SeBAH provides an alternative means of training that promotes a *Hispanic-biblical-theological identity* which is faithful to the Anabaptist heritage and meets the needs of the Hispanic Mennonite and Church of the Brethren congregations in the United States who desire to train their ministerial staff in their own context.

The Denomination's new Coordinator of TRIM and EFSM ministry is Carrie Eikler who resides in Indiana. She and her office staff review and approve each student's work and maintain their transcripts.

Our SeBAH students continue to take their required

District Board of Administration: continued

courses. The TRIM students work on their thirty units independently.

PSWD supports both of these programs prayerfully with the intention of grooming future ministers for our churches. Both programs receive financial assistance from our District. If you or anyone is interested in pursuing one of these programs please contact our District through the main office; (909) 392-4049 or FrontDesk@pswdcob.org or Tom Hostetler / Ministry Commission THostetler@livingathillcrest.org or Jim Martinez / TRIM, SeBAH Coordinator AJobhalfdone@yahoo.com

The Spirit of God moves us all at different times. If you feel so moved to become more involved in leadership or ministerial roles of your church or the District this may be where the spirit is moving you.

Jim Martinez

District Coordinator for TRIM & SeBAH

Mentor Overseer

We have fourteen people in the PSWD licensing program. It amazes me that our little district can have so many wonderful, dedicated people seeking ministry. Many as a second career. The Ministry Commission along with the Nurturing and Credentialing Committee oversees this program. My task is to find Mentors for our Licensed Ministers. Then to help if there are difficulties or problems. Things have been running smoothly. We are beginning to have people finish their education and move on to being Ordained. What a joy this is. Many stay within our district to serve. Some find their calling outside our district. I am confident that wherever they go they will serve well, bringing glory to our Lord and help to their congregations. The PSWD and delegates should be very pleased that the PSWD has such a vital and important program to provide leadership within the larger Denomination. What a blessing!

Yours most sincerely,

John E. Price, Mentor Overseer



Jack Storne, Pastor Erik Brummett, Nancy McAvoy, Russ Matteson, at Erik's installation as pastor at Live Oak CoB



Ernie Snyder, Pastor Nelda Clarke, Jim Daughtry at Nelda's installation as pastor at Tucson CoB



Florcita Merlos, Jessenia Pineda, Edgar Pineda Licensed to Ministry at Príncipe de Paz CoB



Russ Matteson & Joshua Longbrake Licensed to Ministry at Circle of Peace CoB