

The Wesleyan Church

Manual Of Ministerial Preparation

Ninth Edition

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The Wesleyan Church

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Preface

Regulations governing preparation for the various forms of ministry recognized by The Wesleyan Church have developed in a variety of sources over the years since the formation of The Wesleyan Church in 1968. The *Discipline* has always been the primary source of such regulations. But supplementary regulations have been formed in the *General Board Policy for Education and Clergy Development*, in administrative procedures developed by the Division of Education and Clergy Development, and in connection with various forms approved by the General Board or implemented by the division. Candidates and district boards of ministerial development alike have needed to have these various regulations brought together into some systematic form to improve clarity and mutuality of understanding and to promote uniformity of application across the Church.

It is with this purpose in mind that the Division of Education and Clergy Development, in consultation with the General Superintendent, has updated this *Manual of Ministerial Preparation*.

Chapter 1 Ministry in The Wesleyan Church

Meaning of Ministry

MMP-101. The term "ministry" as used in this Manual is clearly defined in *The Discipline* of The Wesleyan Church as follows:

3000. Ministry in the Christian context means service. It is a term which has been lifted out of the commonplace through the modeling of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is identified in both the Old and New Testaments as the Servant or Minister of God and humankind. His service involved His humiliation in the incarnation, His self-forgetful teaching and healing activity, and His shameful suffering and death on the cross for the redemption of the human race. Our Lord also chose this term to characterize the activity of His followers in obedience to His commands and mission. He called all members of His body to a general or corporate ministry which would glorify Him, edify the church, and evangelize the world. And He made such possible through imparting to each believer one or more gifts of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:7-27) in order that members might participate in the work of the ministry and contribute their part to the growth and development of the whole body (Eph. 4: 11-16).

MMP-103. This truth finds frequent expression in *The Discipline*. The doctrinal statement on "The Gifts of the Spirit" declares that the gifts are bestowed by the Spirit "upon individual members of the Church to enable them properly to fulfill their function as members of the body of Christ" (par. 238). Part VI, which deals with "Ministry," follows up its opening definition quoted above by stating that "God through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, assigns to each believer a part in the general or corporate ministry of the church" (*Disc.* 3003). The "Mission of The Wesleyan Church" calls for discipling converts "to be witnesses for their Lord...training them to be good stewards of the talents, time, opportunities, and resources with which Christ has entrusted them...Equipping them for lives of dynamic service to God and man, so that the full potential God has designed for each of them may be realized" (*Disc.* I 05:4, 7, 8).

Specialized Ministries

MMP-106. Ministry, in the theological context, also has a more limited application. While the New Testament teaches the general ministry in which all believers are involved, it also recognizes specialized ministries performed officially and publicly by persons with unique gifts who are regarded by their fellow-believers as having a special role, that of equipping and enabling other members for their ministry (Eph. 4: 11- 16). This specialized service was recognizable in the New Testament age through a distinguishing set of characteristics. It usually combined instruction, correction, responsibility for, and leadership of the members. There are indications that the specialized workers were initiated into their ministry by a special ritual involving the laying on of hands by other specialized ministers. And there was provision for economic support of the specialists so they could give their total time and energies to their service. The Wesleyan Church recognizes this provision for a specialized ministry within the general ministry of all members, balancing its statement that all are assigned a part in the general or corporate ministry by adding:

He also calls some to a specialized or representative type of ministry. As Christ called unto Him whom He would, chose and ordained His twelve apostles "that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach" (Mark 3:14), so He still calls and sends forth His messengers to be servants of the servants who make up the whole church. (*Disc.* 3003).

MMP-108. Jesus made very clear to those to whom He gave the greater responsibility that their leadership role was to be different from all they had previously observed. In fact, it was to be characteristically known as "service" or "ministry," and the person exercising it was to be known as a "servant" or "minister." He declared that those who would be chief of all must become servants of all.

MMP-110. The early church followed its Lord's admonition

and carefully avoided familiar religious and secular terms for leadership and leader. Both Paul and Peter gloried in referring to themselves as servants of Jesus Christ in the salutations at the beginning of their epistles. In fact, as time went on, the more prominent the persons with specialized service became, the more likely they were to be called "servants" or "ministers."

MMP-112. During the centuries that the church struggled to survive persecution from without and heresy from within, the specialized ministers were forced into and they also assumed an ever more prominent and dominating role. Instead of being servants among servants, they were gradually distinguished as "clergy" while other believers became known as "laity." As part of the corruption of the church's understanding of itself which took place in the Middle Ages, the clergy assumed virtually all of the work of ministry. The clergy became the performers and the laity the spectators. The terms "ministry" and "minister" lost touch with their lowly origin and were even carried into the political arena with cabinet members being called "ministers."

MMP-114. In the Protestant Reformation, there came a new emphasis on the universal priesthood of all believers. Later John Wesley shared many aspects of ministry with a multitude of lay persons, and this sharing was continued in the American holiness movement. In the twentieth century, there has come a strong effort to fully restore ministry to the whole church, while recognizing the importance of fully utilizing the equipping and enabling service of specialized ministers. With its long tradition of emphasizing the importance and rights of the laity, The Wesleyan Church has been a part of that effort, as indicated in the quotations above. The role of the specialized minister as a caring pastor-teacher, laboring to equip and enable others for service, reflecting the nature of Christ as a servant-leader, is glimpsed repeatedly in the *Discipline* in guidelines to ministers, lists of ministerial duties, and the various rituals used to set the specialists apart.

Authority for Ministry

MMP-116. The authority for specialized ministry is twofold: it is God originated and church-recognized. The divine call is implied in the Spirit's distribution of gifts and in the prayer that the Lord of the harvest will *send* laborers into the harvest. It is exemplified almost uniformly throughout the Old and New Testaments in persons who served in specialized ministry where we have any significant biographical materials. Also the history of the church adds its testimony to the prevalence of a divine call. But a person's claim to be called of God is not to be accepted without verification. In both the Old Testament (Deut. 13:1-3; 18:21-22) and the New Testament (Matt. 7:15-23; Gal. 1:8-9; 1 John 4:1-8; 2 John 7-11), there are admonitions to test those who claim to be called and guidelines as to how to test them. It is interesting to note that in both Testaments the character of the messenger and the content of the message are the real tests rather than any apparently supernatural sign which accompanies the ministry.

MMP-118. The Wesleyan Church bases its entire structuring of specialized ministries on this twofold authority. It declares:

...as the Holy Spirit impresses this call upon the individual involved, He also confirms the call through the Church. It is the responsibility of the Church both to recognize and endorse God's call, providing for the training and employment of those He selects, and to respect the office of the specialized ministry by refusing its exercise to those not called of God. (*Disc.* 3003)

MMP-120. "The Wesleyan Church believes that four marks will concur in persons whom God has called: grace, gifts, fruit, and an abiding sense of a divine call" (*Disc.* 3006). The first three "marks" were identified by John Wesley. The fourth "mark" was added early in the twentieth century by one of the predecessor bodies of The Wesleyan Church. "Grace" as used in the first mark refers to the "works of grace" or a "condition of grace"; have the persons been converted? entirely sanctified? do they have the fruit of the Spirit? do they live holy lives? "Gifts" in the second mark refers to the "gifts of the Spirit" or "talents" - abilities to understand, reason, speak, communicate, and provide loving care and leadership. "Fruit" in the third mark refers not to the "fruit of the Spirit" but to the effectiveness of their *ministry* in the lives of others-are sinners converted and are believers helped?

MMP-121. The Wesleyan Church does not limit specialized ministries to its male members, but

traditionally recognizes the *full* and equal right of women to be licensed, commissioned, and ordained.

MMP-122. Even though the reference to a "call" has been added during the history of The Wesleyan Church, the concept is neither unique nor new. As indicated above, both in the Scriptures and throughout church history, those who have served in specialized ministry have been thought of as being selected by God and told by Him in some way what they are to do. Some have conceived of this as a threefold call: (1) The inner or personal call which comes to persons themselves (John Calvin termed this the "secret call"). (2) The providential call of an opportunity for ministry. (3) The call of the church to set oneself apart for ministry.

MMP-124. The call of God to specialized ministry may come in different ways. (1) There is the *instantaneous* call, in which in an identifiable and memorable experience God makes the call known to the persons involved; this call is sometimes accompanied by dramatic phenomena -Moses at the burning bush, Isaiah in the Temple, Paul on the Road to Damascus. (2) There is what might be termed the *call from birth*, in which as their consciousness dawns children are also aware that they are called to God's special service - no memory of a beginning point but a certainty of God's intervention (cf. Jer. 1:4-6; Luke 1:13-17. 76-80). (3) There is the *progressive call* in which God makes His will clear through a series of experiences or incidents, resulting in a gradually increasing certainty as to what is to be done. (4) There is the *open-door call* in which obedient believers follow the Spirit's leading through a series of decisions and enter the specialized ministry without any awareness of an event or even a progression but with the conviction that this is where God wants them. It is important to observe that no one of these types is to be preferred to the others. The more dramatic instantaneous type is not the "standard" and is probably the least frequent. God simply fits the call to the personality and the circumstances. Certainty about His call comes because He calls, not because of how He calls. The certainty can be just as great whatever the method He uses.

MMP-126. In addition to the four marks which it expects will concur in persons God has called, The Wesleyan Church is concerned about marriage and family relationships. "Any person sustaining a marriage relation contrary to the Scriptures and the Membership Commitments (*Discipline* 265:10, 410:6; 3108; 3012) shall be ineligible for licensing, commissioning, or ordination in The Wesleyan Church" (*Disc.* 3012). This reflects a New Testament concern that the minister may have only one spouse (I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:5-6). The Wesleyan Church does recognize that persons who have divorced because of the sexual sin of their spouses have a right to remarry, even if they are ministers or potential ministers. *Also Discipline* 3012 cites the Membership Commitments as a governing factor relative to ministerial family relationships. The Membership Commitments provide only for the disciplining of *members* of the Church who divorce for reasons other than sexual sin and then remarry. Therefore there is no definitive statement in the *Discipline* that persons who prior to membership were divorced for reasons other than sexual sin and then remarried cannot find places in the ministry of The Wesleyan Church. However, *any* previous divorce and remarriage by potential ministers or their spouses will need to be reviewed carefully by the district board of ministerial development in consultation with the General Superintendent in determining eligibility.

Credentialed Ministries

MMP-131. Against the background of the doctrine of a specialized ministry within the general ministry of the church, and on the basis of the twofold authority for this specialized ministry -God's call and the church's recognition of the call, The Wesleyan Church issues credentials for specialized ministries. "The Church's endorsement may be limited to a probationary period, taking the form of a license, or it may be granted on a more permanent basis, taking the form of commissioning or ordination" (*Disc.* 3003). "Licensing" is done either by a local church or a district, and is done for one year at a time. "Commissioning" and "ordination" are done only by a district. Although commissioning provides continuing authorization for certain lay ministries as long as active ministry continues, commissioning and ordination for professional ministry normally continues for life. The various credentialed ministries will be mentioned briefly here and more thoroughly treated through the remainder of the *Manual*.

MMP-132. Ordination has been granted by the Church to those called to specialized ministry that equips and enables others for their ministries (MMP-106). The Wesleyan Church has recognized this equipping and enabling ministry to include ministries of proclamation (preaching and teaching), pastoral care, and church leadership. While our understandings of ministry have broadened in current church life, and the emergence of paid staff positions in larger churches has provided increased opportunities for the use of many different gifts in local church ministry, persons seeking ordination should be fully prepared for a proclamation- pastoral-leadership role and be available to fill that role should they be asked by the Church. District boards of ministerial development should be guided in their examination of candidates for ordination by the candidate's call to and/or willingness to be available for such appointments. Those not qualifying for this understanding of ordained ministry should be counseled toward credentialing under an appropriate category of lay ministry.

MMP-133. Potential ministers begin preparation for ordination as ministerial students licensed by the district. They must eventually become licensed ministers, being licensed by the district for the testing of their call in actual service. And once they have proved themselves, they may then become ordained ministers, fully invested with all the functions and rights of the Christian ministry as practiced by The Wesleyan Church. (See Chapter 2.)

MMP-135. Some licensed ministers, who have demonstrated calling, gifts, and usefulness, who have been called to ministry later in life, may find that because of age, aptitude, or other extenuating circumstances it is impossible or impractical for them to pursue ordination. Such persons may, by district action, become *commissioned ministers*, invested with certain ministerial functions and rights. (See Chapter 3.)

MMP-137. Persons who cannot be given regular appointments to particular churches may be given temporary credentials as *supply pastors*. (See MMP-421-425).

MMP-139. There are three categories of lay ministries credentialed by The Wesleyan Church. *Lay ministers* are lay members licensed by local churches to preach or serve under the pastor's direction and as opportunity affords. *Special workers* are persons committed to service in such capacities as directors of music, directors of Christian education, youth directors, song evangelists, chalk arts, children's workers, and spouses in ministry, lay evangelists, or social workers, who may be licensed by a district and then commissioned by a district. Lay persons serving by appointment of the General Board under Global Partners or the Division of Church Multiplication and Discipleship may through district action become *commissioned lay missionaries*. (See Chapter 5.)

Chapter 2 Steps To Ordination

Ordination Steps

MMP-201. The steps by which a member of The Wesleyan Church proceeds toward the ordained ministry are as follows:

- (1) Steps to become a ministerial student
 - a. Membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district in which ordination is sought.
 - b. Application by the applicant or recommendation by the pastor to the local board of administration.
 - c. Examination by the local board of administration relative to grace, gifts, fruit and divine calling (see Disc. 3006, MMP-205)
 - d. Recommendation by the local board of administration to the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) that the applicant be recommended to the district conference for licensing as a ministerial student.
 - e. Vote by the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) to make the recommendation to the district conference.
 - f. Filing of the recommendation by the pastor and local church secretary with the district board of ministerial development (see Disc. 6430).
 - g. Consideration of the recommendation by the district board of ministerial development.
 - h. Recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for the candidate to be licensed as a ministerial student.
 - i. Vote by the district conference to grant the license.
 - j. Issuance and signing of the license by the district superintendent and the district secretary (see Disc. 6260).
 - k. Reception of a license from the district as a ministerial student.
- (2) Enroll with Education and Clergy Development. Candidates may enroll during the ministerial student approval process.
- (3) Steps to becoming a licensed minister
 - a. Maintain membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting the license.
 - b. A minimum of one year of satisfactory service under a license as a ministerial student.
 - c. The completion of the education requirements for licensed ministers or their equivalents as attested by a certification date in the Ministerial Development Portal from Education and Clergy Development. (See Figure 2, licensing requirements.)
 - d. Examination by the local board of administration.
 - e. Recommendation by the local board of administration to the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) that the candidate be recommended to the district conference for district license as a licensed minister.
 - f. Vote by the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) to make the recommendation to the district conference for district license as a licensed minister.
 - g. Filing of the recommendation by the pastor and local church secretary with the district board of ministerial development (see Disc. 6420).
 - h. Readiness to accept the district conference's appointment to active service in one of the recognized forms or categories of ministry, to pursue study with all diligence until completed, to prepare for ordination, and to be given wholly to the ministry.
 - i. Examination by the DBMD relative to qualifications for the ministry and for a district license, including personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof,

- matters of education, doctrine, and practice, and circumstances of personal, family, and business life which bear upon the ministry.
 - j. Recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for the granting of the license.
 - k. Recommendation by the district board of administration for immediate appointment to a pastorate or one of the other recognized forms of ministry.
 - l. Adoption by vote by the district conference of both the reports of the DBMD and the DBA.
 - m. Issuance and signing of the license by the district superintendent and the district secretary (see Disc. 6260).
- (4) Steps to becoming an Ordained Minister
 - a. Maintain membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting ordination.
 - b. Completion of all education requirements for ordination as attested by a certified for credentialing date from Education and Clergy Development in the Ministerial Development Portal.
 - c. Completion of service requirement (a minimum of one year for those graduating with an MDIV from an approved seminary; a minimum of two years for all other candidates).
 - d. Examination by the district board of ministerial development relative to qualifications for the ministry and for ordination, including personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof, matters of education, doctrine, and practice, particularly personal commitment without reservation to each of the Articles of Religion and the Membership Commitments and loyalty to The Wesleyan Church, and circumstances of personal, family, and business life which bear upon the ministry.
 - e. Recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for ordination.
 - f. Adoption of the recommendation by vote of the district conference. In case of an emergency, a candidate who has been recommended by the district board of ministerial development may be elected to the ordained ministry by the district board of administration in the interim of district conference sessions.
 - g. Public service of ordination (see *Disc. 5750-5772*), in which candidates shall witness to their Christian experience, affirm their conviction of a divine call to the ministry, their commitment to the doctrines and principles of The Wesleyan Church, and their loyalty to The Wesleyan Church, after which they shall be separated to the Christian ministry by the Church through the laying on of hands in the person of the General Superintendent (or the representative appointed by the General Superintendent), the district superintendent, and a council of ordination.
 - h. Issuance and signing of a certificate of ordination by the General Superintendent, district superintendent, and district secretary (see *Disc. 6300*; order Form 6300, "Certificate of Ordination," from Wesleyan Publishing House). The responsibility for ordering the certificate rests with the district secretary.

Relation to Local Church

MMP-203. A person aspiring to be a minister shall progress toward ordination by moving from local church membership to status as a licensed minister by first being licensed as a ministerial student.

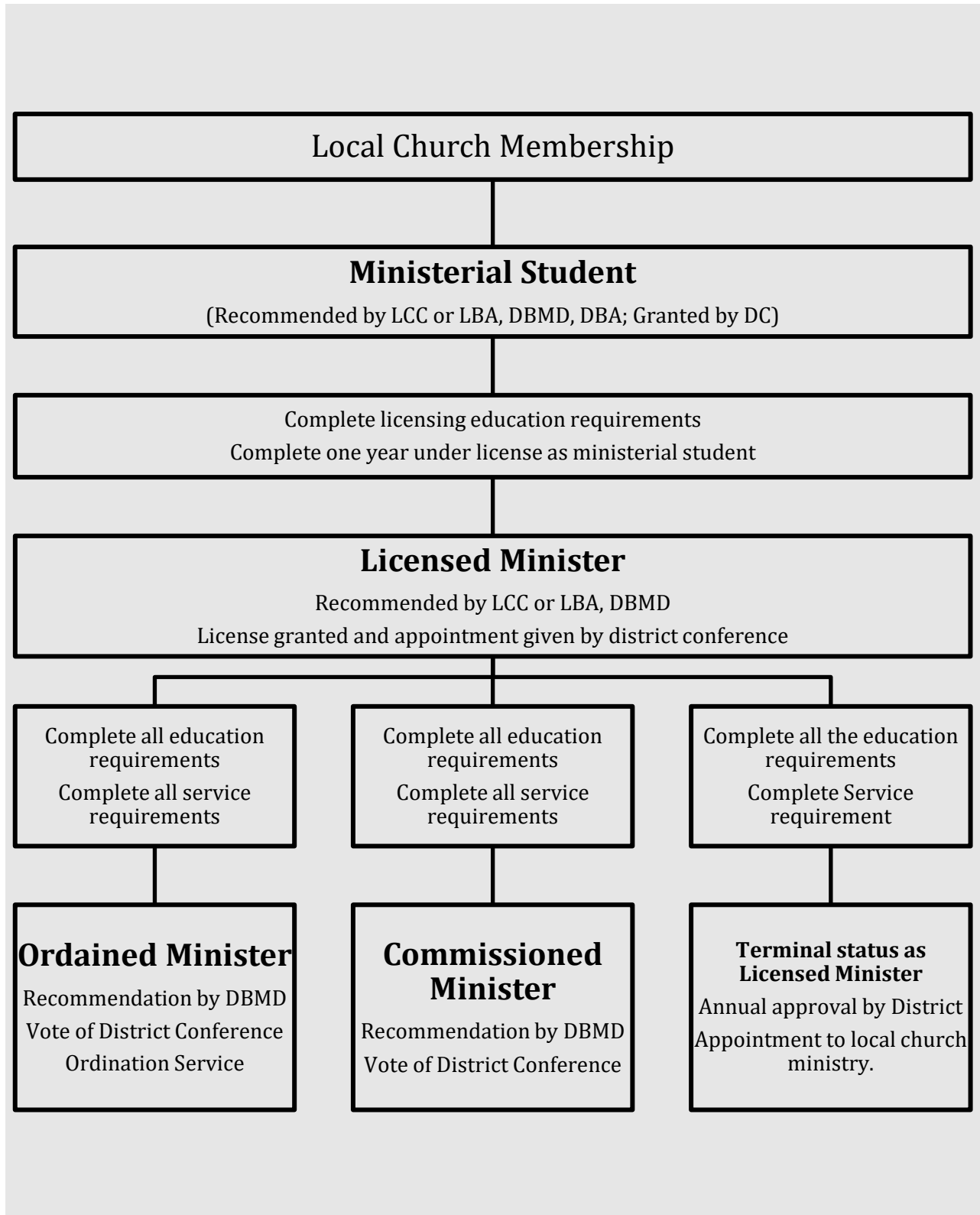
MMP-204. Both the local board of administration and the local church conference may be involved at various points in the recommending of a candidate up to the time at which license is granted by the district as a licensed minister.

- (1) The local board of administration examines a minister-in- preparation in keeping with the *Discipline*, paragraph 3006 (grace, gifts, fruit, & divine calling), and related concerns, each time that it is called upon to consider recommending the person to the local church conference for

recommendation to the district, unless the local church conference has authorized the local board of administration to care for these matters.

- (2) The local board of administration recommends to the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) that a person aspiring to be a minister be recommended to the district board of ministerial development for license as a ministerial student; the local church conference votes on making such a recommendation to the district board of ministerial development.
- (3) The local board of administration recommends to the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) that a ministerial student be recommended to the DBMD for licensing as a licensed minister; the local church conference votes on making such a recommendation to the DBMD (Form 6420).
- (4) Although candidates are not required to make periodic reports to either their local board of administration or local church conference, when licensed ministers are serving as pastors (including assistant), it would be wise for them to keep their local board of administration informed as to their progress, particularly at the time when request is made for recommendation for license as a licensed minister.
- (5) It would be wise for them to keep their local board of administration informed concerning their progress toward ordination; however, the local church is not involved in any way in recommending them for ordination.

Figure 1: Steps to Ordination and Ministerial Commission



MMP-205. Pastors and local boards of administration have serious responsibility relative to recommending candidates to the district for licensing and study. Pastors and boards should evaluate carefully and prayerfully candidates' Christian experience, reputation, conduct, and spiritual stability. While recommendation for license should not be given lightly, neither should candidates be rejected without sound reason. Every possible encouragement should be given to persons who believe that they are called to the ministry. If candidates are recommended, and subsequently licensed by the district, their pastors should call them before their congregations in a public service, and give them a solemn charge respecting the meaning, privilege, and responsibility of their call and ministry. Pastors should then assist the candidates in registering with Education and Clergy Development and lend them every encouragement in the pursuit of their studies. When they complete significant steps on the way to ordination, such as stages of academic work and more advanced forms of license, pastors should also recognize these in public services.

Relation to the Division of Education and Clergy Development (ECD)

MMP-207. Candidates, at the time they first receive licensing (MMP-20 I: 2), are responsible to register with the Division of Education and Clergy Development at the denominational Headquarters.

MMP-209. Candidates shall provide Education and Clergy Development with all necessary transcripts and other pertinent documents relative to their ministerial standing and academic preparation. They shall follow faithfully the instructions of Education and Clergy Development as to education requirements required for their Credential Pathway

MMP-211. The Division of Education and Clergy Development administers certain denominational programs of financial aid for candidates. Candidates who are enrolled in a university of The Wesleyan Church or an approved seminary are responsible to apply for such aid in keeping with the timetable and other conditions prescribed by the division. The division shall make all forms and information readily available and shall appoint a person on each campus who shall be responsible to assist each candidate in securing the assistance which has been provided. Financial aid in the form of loan/grants provides candidates with the opportunity to cancel their repayment obligations through subsequent ministerial service within The Wesleyan Church. Reports on service rendered by former recipients of loan/grants shall be filed annually by the respective recipients with the Division of Education and Clergy Development so that cancellation can be recorded.

MMP-213. Education and Clergy Development shall issue reports to all candidates and their DBMD as to their progress and their current standing through the Ministerial Development Portal. Education and Clergy Development shall also enter a date of certification for licensing upon the satisfactory completion of the education requirements for a district license as a licensed minister and a date of certification for credentialing upon the satisfactory completion of the ordination Education requirements.

MMP-215. While Education and Clergy Development has no direct voice in a district's decision as to whether persons are qualified for ordination, other than to attest the satisfactory completion of their education requirements, Education and Clergy Development should report to the district board of ministerial development any observed points of concern as to the religious experience, doctrinal position, or ethical and moral conduct of persons aspiring to be ministers.

Relation to the District Board of Ministerial Development (DBMD)

MMP-221. The full duties of the DBMD will be covered in Chapter 7, but it is proper at this point to clarify the relationship of persons aspiring to be ministers to the DBMD. The DBMD is the district body charged with overseeing the development and formation of such persons as they move toward becoming a Special Worker, Commissioned Minister, or Ordained Minister. It is responsible to test the validity of their call, identify strengths and weaknesses, counsel them, encourage them, direct them in personal, social, spiritual, and leadership development, and to make recommendations relative to their readiness for and

advancement in ministry. Except for attesting their readiness for service and for evaluating their service under district appointment as to its meeting service requirements for ordination, the DBMD has no direct involvement with their placement in positions of ministry.

MMP-223. Candidates relate to the DBMD in the following ways.

- (1) When applicants are recommended for licensing as ministerial students, their licensing is to be considered by the DBMD in a manner of the board's own choosing and they are to cooperate fully. They are also to cooperate fully with the DBMD and Education and Clergy Development in reporting on the progress toward completing their education requirements. They are to be interviewed annually by the DBMD before the board recommends renewal of their license.
- (2) When candidates are recommended for license as licensed ministers, they are to be examined by the DBMD relative to their qualifications.
- (3) Licensed ministers are to cooperate fully with the DBMD and Education and Clergy Development in reporting annually on their progress in their studies. Each is to file the proper annual service report with the DBMD. Each is to be interviewed annually by the DBMD. Each is to make such additional reports as the DBMD shall require.
- (4) All candidates are to counsel with their DBMD about their education requirements. Candidates may substitute Ministry Training Programs for a Wesleyan University or Approved Seminary only when such is approved by their DBMD.

MMP-225. The DBMD is responsible to monitor and provide personal and professional growth for ministers throughout their lifetime of service (*Disc. 1390: 11*). Even after ministers have been commissioned or ordained, they need to continue to develop their skills for ministry, their understanding of themselves and their world, and their ability to provide effective leadership in the local church. The DBMD may assist ministers in achieving their full potential for ministry through individual or group interviews, assessments, growth contracts, seminars, or other appropriate means.

Relation to the District Board of Administration (DBA)

MMP-226. While the DBMD recommends candidates for licensing, commissioning, or ordination, and makes reports on their readiness for actual appointment to service, it is the district conference which authorizes licensing, commissioning, or ordination, and the district board of administration recommends any specific appointment (including appointment as a ministerial student) and the district conference approves such appointments. In the interim of district conference sessions, the district board of administration has full authority to authorize licensing, commissioning, or ordination, and to make all appointments. The district board of administration also has the power in the interim of district conference sessions, subject to proper judicial procedure, to revoke licenses, and to remove candidates from their appointments. Ministerial students and licensed ministers maintain contact with the DBA by making such reports to its chair, the district superintendent, as may be required.

Ministerial Student

MMP-231. As soon as persons aspiring to be ministers are convinced of a call which they expect to lead to ordination, and their local church approves to the extent of being ready to recommend that they begin their preparation, they should be placed under the care of their district board of ministerial development. The simplest form in which this is done is through the granting of a ministerial student's license by the district conference.

MMP-233. Licensing as a ministerial student requires the following steps:

- (1) Membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district in which ordination is sought.
- (2) Application by the applicant or recommendation by the pastor to the local board of administration.

- (3) Examination by the local board of administration relative to grace, gifts, fruit and divine calling (see *Disc. 3006, MMP-205*)
- (4) Recommendation by the local board of administration to the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) that the applicant be recommended to the district conference for licensing as a ministerial student.
- (5) Vote by the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) to make the recommendation to the district conference.
- (6) Filing of the recommendation by the pastor and local church secretary with the district board of ministerial development (see *Disc. 6430*).
- (7) Consideration of the recommendation by the district board of ministerial development.
- (8) Recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for the candidate to be licensed as a ministerial student.
- (9) Vote by the district conference to grant the license.
- (10) Issuance and signing of the license by the district superintendent and the district secretary (see *Disc. 6260*).

MMP-235. Candidates shall enroll immediately with Education and Clergy Development at the Wesleyan Church Headquarters. If they are enrolled in an approved education pathway at a Wesleyan University or Approved Seminary, they may complete their education requirements in such order as the institution shall recommend. If they are enrolled in a Ministry Training Program, they should first seek to complete the education requirements for district license as licensed ministers. In either case, they must continue to complete two courses per year, even after they receive certificates showing that they have completed the education requirements for district license as licensed ministers, as long as their licenses are renewed, or until Education and Clergy Development certifies completion of the education requirements in the Ministerial Development Portal. If they are enrolled in an educational institution in a degree program designed to prepare them for the ministry, courses required for the degree but not specifically required by The Wesleyan Church for ordination will nevertheless satisfy the two courses per year requirement.

MMP-237. Candidates are to cooperate fully with the DBMD and Education and Clergy Development in reporting annually on the progress of their studies. They are to be interviewed annually by their DBMD before the board recommends renewal of their license. Their license may be renewed annually by recommendation of the DBMD and vote of their district conference, until they become licensed ministers, or until they complete the pre-ordination education requirements. Such renewal requires no further recommendation by their local church conference.

MMP-247. As long as candidates qualify for and receive a ministerial student license, they shall have the right:

- (1) To have as their credentials a license, signed annually by the district superintendent and the district secretary, and an annual pocket certificate of standing, issued and signed by the district secretary.
- (2) To preach the gospel as opportunity affords, within the limits of proper respect for the appointments and rights of other Wesleyan ministers (*Disc. 3114-3117*) and the counsel and direction of the district superintendent.
- (3) To be nonvoting members of their district conference.
- (4) To transfer from one district to another as set forth below in MMP-403.
- (5) To have recourse, even if under discipline, to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters involving complaint against their character or ministerial conduct and to appeal the decision of such court (see *Disc. S I SO, S 170- 5180*).

MMP-249. Candidates holding district ministerial licenses shall be responsible to cooperate fully with the DBMD and Education and Clergy Development in obtaining an annual report on their progress in study. They shall also report to the district superintendent and the DBMD in any other ways they shall require,

and shall file the proper annual service report form with the DBMD. As long as all these reports are properly made and they maintain their status as candidates in preparation for ordination, their licenses may be renewed annually by the district conference. When education requirements for ordination have been completed, district license as a ministerial student may be continued for up to one year while they are seeking placement. Candidates are amenable to the district which grants their license, and their license may be revoked between sessions of the district conference by judicial process (see Disc. 5170-5180)

Licensed Minister

MMP-251. Candidates may be granted district license as licensed ministers only subject to the following conditions:

- (1) They must have completed a minimum of one year under license as a ministerial student.
- (2) They must have completed the education requirements for district license as a licensed minister (see Figure 2). Even if they have a certificate showing completion of the ordination education requirements and therefore all education requirements, if they have not completed service requirements for ordination they are still eligible only for status as a licensed minister. And even if they have completed all education requirements and the service requirements, if the district board of ministerial development believes that they have not yet reached the proper level of spiritual and leadership maturity it may continue to recommend them for license as licensed ministers.
- (3) The district must plan to appoint them to actual ministry, as pastors or in some other recognized form of ministry.

MMP-253. District license as a licensed minister requires the following steps:

- (1) Membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting the license.
- (2) A minimum of one year of satisfactory service under a license as a ministerial student.
- (3) A minimum of completion of the education requirements for licensed ministers or their equivalents as attested by a certification date in the Ministerial Development Portal from Education and Clergy Development. (See Figure 2, licensing requirements.)
- (4) Examination by the local board of administration.
- (5) Recommendation by the local board of administration to the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) that the candidate be recommended to the district conference for district license as a licensed minister.
- (6) Vote by the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) to make the recommendation to the district conference.
- (7) Filing of the recommendation by the pastor and local church secretary with the district board of ministerial development (see Disc. 6420).
- (8) Readiness to accept the district conference's appointment to active service in one of the recognized forms or categories of ministry, to pursue study with all diligence until completed, to prepare for ordination, and to be given wholly to the ministry.
- (9) Examination by the DBMD relative to qualifications for the ministry and for a district license, including personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof, matters of education, doctrine, and practice, and circumstances of personal, family, and business life which bear upon the ministry.
- (10) Recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for the granting of the license.
- (11) Recommendation by the district board of administration for immediate appointment to a pastorate or one of the other recognized forms of ministry.
- (12) Adoption by vote by the district conference of both the reports of the DBMD and the DBA.
- (13) Issuance and signing of the license by the district superintendent and the district secretary (see Disc. 6260).

MMP-255. As long as candidates qualify for and receive a district license as licensed ministers, they shall have the right:

- (1) To have as their credentials a license, signed annually by the district superintendent and the district secretary, and an annual pocket certificate of standing, issued and signed by the district secretary.
- (2) To preach the gospel, and, when appointed as a pastor or assistant pastor of a Wesleyan church, to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper, to perform all parts of divine worship, and to solemnize the rite of matrimony wherever local laws will permit.
- (3) To contract the pastoral relationship with local Wesleyan churches subject to the approval of the district conference and other regulations of the *Discipline*; and when appointed pastor to enjoy the use for religious meetings of the church building(s) of the pastoral charge to which they have been assigned, and to serve their assigned pastoral charge without interference by unauthorized activities of another minister of The Wesleyan Church.
- (4) To be voting members of the district conference if pastoring a Wesleyan church or serving it as an assistant pastor, or non-voting members of the district conference if appointed to some other recognized form of ministry.
- (5) To transfer from one district to another as set forth below in MMP-405.
- (6) To have recourse, even if under discipline, to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters involving complaint against their character or ministerial conduct and to appeal the decision of such court (see *Disc.* 5150, 5170-5180).

MMP-257. If licensed ministers have not yet completed all education requirements for ordination they are responsible to be enrolled in the pre-ordination education requirements under Education and Clergy Development and their district board of ministerial development, and to seek to complete requirements as quickly as possible, either in a Wesleyan university or approved seminary or, if approved by the DBMD, through Ministry Training Programs. They must complete at least two courses a year toward their degree or the completion of the education requirements, and education requirements for ordination must be completed within seven years of the first issuance of a license as a licensed minister.

MMP-259. Persons holding license as licensed ministers may find records of their candidacy and credential transcript in the Ministerial Development Portal. They shall also report to the district superintendent and the DBMD in any other ways they shall require, and shall file proper annual service report forms with the DBMD. As long as their service under district appointment is satisfactory, all reports are properly made, they pursue the education requirements in keeping with MMP-257, and they are willing to accept appointment by the district conference, their license may be renewed annually by the district conference. (If licensed ministers fail to file their annual service report, unless such failure is due to illness, injury, or a similar emergency, their license shall not be renewed.) When education requirements for ordination have been completed, district license as a licensed minister may be continued for up to one year without appointment while awaiting placement. Licensed ministers are amenable to the district which grants their license, and their license may be revoked between sessions of the district conference by judicial process (see *Disc.* 5170-5180).

Terminal Status as Licensed Minister

MMP-260. A district may take action to make the licensed minister status a terminal status, after successful completion of the education requirements as outlined by the Ministerial Education Requirements Agency and a period of supervised ministry as advised by the DBMD.

The status remains in effect in that district when serving in a ministerial capacity in a church in that district and when completing a satisfactory annual service report (ASR) for noting membership and leadership effectiveness for the previous year;

When the licensed minister resigns, transfers, or ceases their ministerial appointment in a district

church, the certificate of ministerial license would be filed in the district office, or the license may be accepted for transfer in the next district within The Wesleyan Church. The license may be revoked for such reasons as ordained or commissioned ministers; and

All Wesleyan ministerial courses, so approved for ordination, may be used to apply for ordination or commissioning if the licensed minister so desires.

Figure 2: Education Requirements for Licensed Minister Terminal Status Licensing Requirements

Church Leadership and Management

Introduction to Homiletics (through August 31, 2023)

Methods of Bible Study (After September 1, 2023)

Introduction to New Testament

Introduction to Old Testament

Introduction to Theology

Wesleyan History and Discipline

General Requirements

Doctrine of Holiness

Licensed Minister Terminal Elective 1

Licensed Minister Terminal Elective 2

Licensed Minister Terminal Elective 3

Licensed Minister Terminal Elective 4

Licensed Minister Terminal Elective 5.

Licensed Minister Permanent electives must be chosen from courses approved for the education requirements for Ordination.

The five Licensed Minister Terminal status elective education requirements are selected by the candidate in consultation with the DBMD for a total of 12 education requirements. Electives should align with ministry role. Examples of suggested elective clusters are available [here](#).

Education Requirements

MMP-261. The Wesleyan Church recognizes the need for multiple "tracks" of academic preparation for the ministry. Two thousand years of church history, as well as the history of the Wesleyan and holiness movements, indicate God's choice of persons with varied abilities and aptitudes as His workers. Both the "lay fisherman" Peter and the "theological graduate" Paul were used in the New Testament era. And the university-graduate Wesley brothers used the assistance of lay preachers with little or no institutional preparation. The needs of local churches for various types of pastoral leadership vary widely, and pastors indigenous to their cultures are needed. This does not mean that some should study and some do not need to study. But it does mean that the form of study will vary considerably.

Education Pathways: Track 1 Seminary Degree

MMP-263. The preferred program of academic preparation for ministry in The Wesleyan Church is an undergraduate degree from the universities of The Wesleyan Church followed by graduation from the Master of Divinity program at Wesley Seminary or one of the seminaries approved by The Wesleyan

Church. The Wesleyan Church maintains the Wesleyan Seminary Foundation to aid candidates pursuing this track. Loan/grants and other scholarships are administered through the Division of Education and Clergy Development. While those who pursue Track 1 will far exceed minimal education requirements for ordination, they are required to cover the education requirements listed in Figure 2, "Education Requirements for Ordination."

Education Pathways: Track 2 Wesleyan University Professional Degree

MMP-265. The standard program of academic preparation for ministry in The Wesleyan Church, by which all other programs are measured, is that of graduation from a Wesleyan university with a degree calling for a major in professional preparation for the ministry. Programs meeting the education requirements for ordination are called approved education pathways. Such degrees are offered by all five Wesleyan universities in the United States and Canada, including both Kingswood University and the four liberal arts institutions. Kingswood University is a single-purpose institution, concentrating on church-related vocational instruction. The liberal arts institutions offer ministerial training as one of many professional, pre-professional, vocational, or general liberal arts programs. At all five universities, loan/grants funded by The Wesleyan Church are administered by the Division of Education and Clergy Development through the proper representatives. While those who pursue Track 2 will exceed minimal education requirements for ordination at some points, they are required to cover the education requirements listed in Figure 2, "Education Requirements for Ordination."

Education Pathways: Track 3 Wesleyan Ministry Training Programs

MMP-267. A special track of academic preparation for ministry in The Wesleyan Church has been provided through Ministry Training Programs administered by the Division of Education and Clergy Development. Ministry Training Programs are designed for persons who find it difficult to attend a Wesleyan university due to family responsibilities or who have already attended university and are now making a career change. Under all circumstances person's use of this program rather than attendance at a Wesleyan university or approved seminary must be approved by their district board of ministerial development due to other extenuating circumstances, and such approval must be attested by the DBMD to Education and Clergy Development.

MMP-269. To register in Ministry Training Programs requires documentary proof of graduation from high school or the passing of the General Education Development (GED) test which is available through most high schools. Applicants whose educational achievement level is below a High School Diploma or its equivalent (GED), will be enroll in a probationary status. This probationary status will remain active while the candidate completes the first three courses in an Approved Education Pathway. Following successful completion of the first three courses with a grade of a C or higher, the candidate shall be removed from probationary status and allowed to continue under regular status and the normal requirements. "Introduction to FLAMA" is provided to help spanish language students better understand The Wesleyan Church and how to be a successful student in FLAMA.

MMP-271. Ministry Training Programs do not provide the full equivalent of a university program. Of necessity it concentrates on the specialized subjects needed for ministry. It is expected that candidates will secure more general educational requirements in English, history, literature, and speech through university or adult education courses, and district boards of ministerial development should encourage this, especially in any area in which the candidate exhibits weakness. Each Ministry Training Programs is taught by a Wesleyan university or seminary professor, or someone academically and/or experientially qualified to be a professor as approved by Education and Clergy Development. Ministry Training Programs are available in various formats: online, onsite, hybrid, and self-paced.. All programs must be approved annually by Education and Clergy Development through forms provided. Ministry Training Programs are associated with a Wesleyan University, district, or local church (or as approved by Education and Clergy

Development).

MMP-273. Wesleyan universities, under their prerogative, may grant university credit for work done through Ministry Training Programs. In such cases, when persons who have previously used Ministry Training Programs enroll at a Wesleyan university, Education and Clergy Development will provide the school with a transcript of their work which will be evaluated in terms of the school's policies.

Education Pathways: Track 4 Standardization of Non-Wesleyan Programs

MMP-276. It is recognized that some candidates for the ministry will have secured some or all of their university and/or seminary training outside the institutions and agencies of The Wesleyan Church. It is not at all desirable that this should be a track followed by those who from the beginning of their study are members of The Wesleyan Church. Rather it is what one would expect of persons transferring into The Wesleyan Church after much or all of their formal training has been completed. In such a case, transcripts and other records of study shall be forwarded to Education and Clergy Development so that it can carefully evaluate the candidate's work in terms of its equivalence to the education requirements, with special attention paid to the candidate's qualifications in Wesleyan doctrine, history, and polity. Normally any such candidate will be required to take the education requirements in Wesleyan Church History and Wesleyan *Discipline*, plus any others needed to make up deficiencies. The Education and Clergy Development Division will not be able to certify the candidate as having completed education requirements until all deficiencies have been cared for.

Service Requirements

MMP-286. In addition to the education requirements for ordination or to the ministry in The Wesleyan Church, a candidate must serve for two years in actual ministry under the appointment of the district conference. Since graduates of the approved seminaries who have earned a Master of Divinity degree have already devoted seven years to their educational preparation, and in most cases will have been exposed to considerable ministry under supervision and to repeated opportunities for evaluation and correction, the service requirement is reduced to one year in their case. For university and seminary graduates, the service requirement will usually be cared for after completion of educational requirements, but it is possible for the service requirement to be cared for during the years spent completing the education requirements if the candidate is under appointment by the district conference and supervision by the district board of ministerial development. The service must be full-time as determined by the district board of ministerial development.

MMP-287. If service credit is being earned through appointment as a staff minister with a fairly narrow job description, the district board of ministerial development should assist the senior pastor and the candidate in assuring full exposure to the many responsibilities of pastoral ministry.

MMP-288. Service credit may be earned under district appointment as any of the following:

- (1) A pastor.
- (2) An evangelist.
- (3) A missionary under appointment by the General Board to serve in a ministerial capacity under Global Partners or the Division of Church Multiplication and Discipleship.
- (4) An employee serving in a ministerial capacity on the administrative staff or faculty of one of the universities of The Wesleyan Church or one of the approved seminaries.
- (5) An employee of a local church serving in a ministerial capacity in a special Christian education program such as a daycare center or day school.
- (6) An employee of the general church or a district serving in a ministerial capacity.
- (7) An employee of a church-related organization serving The Wesleyan Church or of an educational institution, evangelistic or missionary organization not directly related to The Wesleyan Church, providing that such service is in a ministerial capacity; or an institutional chaplain.

(For a more detailed definition of "in a ministerial capacity," see Appendix A.)

MMP-290. At least one of the years of service credit must have been earned in The Wesleyan Church under appointment by the district in which candidates are to be ordained, except that if ordination is to be in a district other than the one in which the service requirement was met, the district conference which ordains them must have recommendations for ordination from not only its own district board of ministerial development but also from the district board of ministerial development of the district in which they previously served.

Final Steps to Ordination

MMP-296. Ordination to the ministry requires the following steps:

- (1) Membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting ordination.
- (2) Satisfactory completion of service requirements under appointment as a licensed minister.
- (3) Certificate from Education and Clergy Development showing completion of the pre-ordination education requirements or its equivalent.
- (4) Examination by the district board of ministerial development relative to qualifications for the ministry and for ordination, including personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof, matters of education, doctrine, and practice, particularly personal commitment without reservation to each of the Articles of Religion and the Membership Commitments and loyalty to The Wesleyan Church, and circumstances of personal, family, and business life which bear upon the ministry.
- (5) Recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for ordination.
- (6) Adoption of the recommendation by vote of the district conference. In case of an emergency, a candidate who has been recommended by the district board of ministerial development may be elected to the ordained ministry by the district board of administration in the interim of district conference sessions.
- (7) Public service of ordination (see *Disc.* 5750-5772), in which candidates shall witness to their Christian experience, affirm their conviction of a divine call to the ministry, their commitment to the doctrines and principles of The Wesleyan Church, and their loyalty to The Wesleyan Church, after which they shall be separated to the Christian ministry by the Church through the laying on of hands in the person of the General Superintendent (or the representative appointed by the General Superintendent), the district superintendent, and a council of ordination.
- (8) Issuance and signing of a certificate of ordination by the General Superintendent, district superintendent, and district secretary (see *Disc.* 6300; order Form 6300, "Certificate of Ordination," from Wesleyan Publishing House). The responsibility for ordering the certificate rests with the district secretary.

Figure 3: Educational Requirements for Ordination

The following education requirements shall constitute the education requirements for the Ordained Minister credential:

Licensing Requirements

Church Leadership and Management
Introduction to Homiletics (through August 31, 2023)
Introduction to New Testament
Introduction to Old Testament
Introduction to Theology
Wesleyan History and Discipline

General Requirements

Advanced Theology
Christian Education
Doctrine of Holiness
Evangelism and Church Health
Expository Preaching
General Church History
Global & Intercultural Ministries
Methods of Bible Study (will become a licensing requirement September 1, 2023)
New Testament Elective
Pastoral Counseling
Old Testament Elective
Pastoral Ministries
Philosophy
Psychology
Sociology
Spiritual Formation
Worship
Supervised Ministry

Supervised Ministry is an education requirement carried out through residencies, internships, practicums, district mentoring programs, pastor/staff mentoring or approved supervised ministry education requirements. It may be completed concurrently with Ministry Training Programs or after their completion. Those in Approved Education Pathway degree programs typically meet the Supervised Ministry requirements within the program. Although it can and often is completed concurrent to the two-year service requirement (e.g., under qualifying appointment as a licensed minister), it is a separate education requirement.

Chapter 3 Commissioned Minister

Function of a Commissioned Minister

MMP-301. The Wesleyan Church recognizes that God calls a rich variety of persons into the ministry. Among these are some who have responded to the call to ministry later in life, who have demonstrated calling, gifts, and usefulness, but who due to health or age, make it impossible for them to pursue ordination. Such persons, after counsel with an agreement by the district board of ministerial development, may choose instead to pursue commissioning as a commissioned minister. When all qualifications have been met and the candidates have been separated to the service of Christ by the vote of their district conference and by a commissioning service, they will have been invested with those functions of the Christian ministry essential to their level of service.

MMP-302. Licensed ministers who have not completed the education requirements for ordination within a maximum of seven years (MMP-257) may be recommended for commissioning as commissioned ministers when they have met the requirements for commissioning. This recommendation is not to be given automatically, but rather only in those cases in which the DBA and DBMD believe that this is the proper course to follow in the light of this particular person's gifts and circumstances.

MMP-303. While the education requirements are fewer for commissioning than for ordination, the ministry of commissioned ministers is also more narrowly focused than is that of ordained ministers. They share the functions and rights of ordained ministers in all respects except the following:

- (1) Their right to solemnize the rite of matrimony may be restricted by civil law in some localities.
- (2) They are not eligible for election to any office restricted to ordained ministers or laypersons. This means that they are not eligible for election as a district superintendent, assistant district superintendent, member-at-large on the district board of administration, member of the district board of ministerial development, or as a delegate to General Conference.
- (3) They are voting members of the district conference only if serving under appointment as the pastor of a Wesleyan church or as a full-time associate or assistant pastor of a Wesleyan church; they are non-voting members if assigned to some other category of service or if they are in the process of transfer.

Steps to Commissioning

MMP-305. Commissioning as a commissioned minister requires the following steps:

- (1) Membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting commissioning.
- (2) Satisfactory service as a licensed minister with appointment by the district for a minimum of two years.
- (3) Forty years of age or older at the time of receiving license as a ministerial student or approved by the DBMD for commissioned minister studies if their educational level is significantly deficient or if their abilities to complete the entire ordination due to age or health concerns make such an action necessary.
- (4) A date of certification in the Ministerial Development Portal from Education and Clergy Development showing completion of the commissioned minister's education requirements or its equivalent (see Figure 5). The commissioned minister education requirements must be completed within six years of service under a ministerial license. The license as a licensed minister *shall* not be renewed beyond the sixth year. In the case of licensed ministers who have failed to complete the ordination education requirements within the allotted time, the recommendation of the district board of ministerial development after consultation with the district board of administration is necessary. This recommendation is not to be given automatically, but only in those cases in which the DBA and DBMD believe that this is the proper course to follow in light of this particular

- person's gifts and circumstances.
- (5) Examination by the district board of ministerial development relative to qualifications for the *ministry* and for commissioning, including personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof, matters of education, doctrine, and practice, particularly personal commitment without reservation to each of the Articles of Religion and the Membership Commitments and loyalty to The Wesleyan Church, and circumstances of personal, family, and business life which bear upon the ministry.
 - (6) Adoption of the recommendation by vote of the district conference. In case of an emergency, a candidate who has been recommended by the district board of ministerial development may be approved for commissioning as a commissioned minister by the district board of administration in the interim of district conference sessions.
 - (7) Public service of commissioning (see *Disc.* 5800-5845), in which candidates shall witness to their Christian experience, affirm their conviction of a divine call to the ministry, their commitment to the doctrines and principles of The Wesleyan Church, after which they shall be separated to the Christian ministry by the Church through the laying on of hands in the person of the general superintendent (if present), the district superintendent, and a council of ordination.
 - (8) Issuance and signing of a commission by the general superintendent, district superintendent, and the district secretary (see *Disc.* 6280).

Figure 4 Education Requirements for Commissioning as a Commissioned Minister

The following education requirements shall constitute the education requirements for the Commissioned Minister credential:

Licensing Requirements

Church Leadership and Management

Introduction to Homiletics (through August 31, 2023)

Introduction to New Testament

Introduction to Old Testament

Introduction to Theology

Wesleyan History and Discipline

General Requirements

Christian Education

Doctrine of Holiness

Evangelism and Church Health

General Church History

Methods of Bible Study (will become a licensing requirement September 1, 2023)

Pastoral Counseling

Pastoral Ministries

Spiritual Formation

Supervised Ministry

Chapter 4 Transfer and Supply

Transfers between Districts

MMP-403. Candidates may be granted letters of transfer from one district to another by their district superintendent. It shall be sent directly to the district superintendent of the district to which they are transferring, and they shall continue to be considered members of the former district until a reply has been received from the latter district stating that they have been duly received as members of a local church within the district and have been duly enrolled as candidates by the district. (See *Disc.* 6440 and 6450). The receiving district may see a candidate's Credential Transcript with Education and Clergy Development in the Ministerial Development Portal.

MMP-405. Licensed ministers who desire to accept pastoral calls from churches within the bounds of other districts, or if not expecting to pastor nevertheless desire to transfer ministerial membership to other districts, must first obtain the written permission of the general superintendent and the district superintendent over the district to which they desire to transfer. When permission has been secured, they shall ask their district superintendent for a letter of transfer to be sent directly to the district superintendent of the district to which they are transferring. They shall continue to be considered members of the former district until a reply has been received from the latter district stating that they have been duly enrolled as members of the district conference. (See MMP-403 above for forms.) Licensed ministers shall ensure their former district superintendent and district board of ministerial development have properly recorded in the TWCHub their standing with reference to education requirements and their record of service under the appointment of the district conference.

Transfers from Other Denominations

MMP-411. The process of transfer for ministers from other denominations into The Wesleyan Church is the same for ordained ministers, commissioned ministers, and licensed ministers. The level into which they are received depends upon their status in their former denomination and their personal qualifications as well as their academic preparation as compared to the requirements of The Wesleyan Church.

MMP-413. Ordained ministers from other denominations, or ministers from other denominations who have been ordained to deacon's orders, or ministers who have been licensed or authorized in some manner equivalent to the commissioning or licensing of Wesleyan ministers by a district conference, may seek reception into The Wesleyan Church. They shall do so by presenting to the district superintendent their letter of standing or other credentials and transcripts or other records of ministerial training. They may qualify for reception as ordained ministers or commissioned or licensed ministers, as the case may justify, according to the following procedures:

- (1) The applicant shall identify the district in which transfer will be completed. A map of district geographic boundaries [here](#).
- (2) Contact the district superintendent from the district in which you would be completing your transfer and discuss the feasibility of transfer into The Wesleyan Church.
- (3) Reach verbal agreement that transfer into The Wesleyan Church is mutually desirable.
- (4) The transferring minister shall enroll with Education and Clergy Development while also completing the application (see next step).
- (5) The applicant shall present to the district superintendent:
 - a. A completed Transferring Ministers Application. The district superintendent shall assist the applicant in applying for the approval of the General Superintendent (*Disc.* 1935:16) for reception as a minister in process of transfer by using the Transferring Ministers application form.

- b. Submission to the district superintendent of documentation of good standing from the sending denomination/church, including both
 - i. A current, valid letter of standing from the sending denomination/church (of membership) from which the minister is transferring (*not* a Wesleyan church if they are already appointed or a member) OR
 - ii. If the transferring ministers sending denomination or church issues current ministerial credentials, e.g., pocket credentials, a copy of these current credentials. (current is defined as within the last year).
 - c. Submission to the district superintendent of a copy of the ordination certificate, or the equivalent.
 - d. Submission to the district superintendent of photocopies of transcripts or other records of ministerial training.
- (6) If the district superintendent is favorable to initiating steps that might lead to the applicant's transfer, the district superintendent shall sign the application as a recommendation to transfer and upload the Transferring Ministers Application, copies of the letter of standing, ministerial credentials, transcripts and other records of ministerial training to the TWCHub Candidate Record and an email by the district shall be sent to headquarters.
- (7) Headquarters (ECD & C&A) ensures all documentation required has been provided and the application is completed accurately and fully.
- (8) Review of documentation and approval by the General Superintendent for beginning the process of transfer into The Wesleyan Church.
- (9) Appointment by the district conference to appointment as ordained minister in process of transfer, commissioned minister in process of transfer, or licensed minister in process of transfer, as the case may justify. This relationship shall continue for one year unless the district conference by vote shall extend it. While serving under this relation, transferees are non-voting members of the district conference, may serve as supply pastors, and shall complete their education requirements. If at any time the district board of administration shall determine that it is not in the best interests of the district to continue the relation, they may by majority vote terminate the relation and any supply assignment, and thus dismiss them from all ministerial relations to The Wesleyan Church. Ordained ministers in the process of transfer shall have authority to administer the sacraments and perform marriages, while serving as supply pastors.
- (10) Recommendation by the district board of ministerial development to the district conference for approval as a minister in process of denominational transfer followed by approval by the district conference.
- (11) The copies of the ministerial transcripts and other records of ministerial training submitted with the application will be evaluated by Education and Clergy Development and the Credential Transcript updated on the Ministerial Development portal to indicate what further training will be needed to standardize their academic preparation in alignment with the education requirements of The Wesleyan Church. If official transcripts are required, the candidate should request from the institution(s) for transcripts to be sent to Education and Clergy Development. The candidate may direct questions regarding their education requirements to Education and Clergy Development.
- (12) Candidate completes at least one year under appointment as a minister in process of denominational transfer (or more if the district determines, usually when further requirements are yet to be completed).
- (13) Submission by the candidate of DBMD Form #6 to the district board of ministerial development.
- (14) Examination of the candidate by the district board of ministerial development relative to their Christian experience, call, and qualifications for the ministry (see *Disc.* 3000-3006) and relative to the nature of the ordination, commission, or license which they have previously received.

- (15) The following must be completed prior to the DBMD's recommendation of the candidate to the District Conference for validation of their credentials. They can be completed concurrently.
 - a. Completion by the candidate through an approved education pathway of the education requirements for ministers in process of denominational transfer as outlined on the candidate's Credential Transcript in the Ministerial Development Portal. Candidates may submit an application for Credit by Portfolio to Education and Clergy Development (this application can be obtained through Education and Clergy Development).
 - b. Education and Clergy Development's attestation of the completion of the education requirements as indicated by a date of certification for credentialing in the Ministerial Development Portal.
 - c. Completion by the candidate of at least one year of qualifying and satisfactory service under appointment by the district conference.
 - d. The candidate shall seek and be approved for membership in a local Wesleyan church in the district receiving the credentialed minister (to be completed prior to recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for recognition of credentials. This may be completed earlier in the process).
- (16) Recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for the candidate to be recognized as ordained, commissioned or licensed ministers (as the case may justify) of The Wesleyan Church.
- (17) Vote of the district conference to receive the minister into full standing as a minister of The Wesleyan Church.
- (18) Districts may choose to recognize the transferring ministers' credentials during the Ordination Service.
- (19) Issuing by the district of a proper certificate validating the ordination or commissioning, signed by the General Superintendent, the district superintendent, and the district Secretary (see *Disc.* 6320). For the licensed minister, a license shall be issued (cf. MMP-253: 13).

MMP-416. In addition to the requirements of *The Discipline* and this Manual, the following guidelines are suggested as means of assisting ministers in process of denominational transfer in developing an effective ministry within The Wesleyan Church.

- (1) The district into which the minister transfers may provide an orientation for all new ministers, acquainting them with the organization, leadership, standing rules, procedures, expectations and personnel of the district. Transferring ministers are encouraged to attend.
- (2) Transferring ministers should attend the New Pastor's Orientation offered through Education and Clergy Development to become acquainted with the resources afforded to ministers by the general church.
- (3) Transferring ministers should, within the first two years of appointment, visit the Wesleyan university in their area and become familiar with educational opportunities for themselves, their church and their parishioners.
- (4) Transferring ministers should participate fully in their district's trainings, camps, ministers' retreats and conferences.
- (5) Along with the close supervision and counsel of the district superintendent, transferring ministers may want to ask that an experienced pastor of the district be assigned to assist with periodic questions regarding ministry in the Church.

Supply Pastor

MMP-421. Normally Wesleyan churches will be pastored by Wesleyan ordained, commissioned or licensed ministers. But emergencies will arise in which the district will want to use someone in pastoral

service who is not eligible for regular pastoral appointment to the church involved. A person appointed by the district conference or the district board of administration to serve under such irregular circumstances is called a supply pastor. Service as supply pastor by a person under preliminary license does not count as service requirement toward ordination.

MMP-423. The following persons may serve as supply pastors:

- (1) Wesleyan ordained, commissioned or licensed ministers serving under some other appointment. (One example would be an ordained minister whose regular appointment was as a member of the faculty of a Wesleyan university or Wesley Seminary, who agreed to serve as a supply pastor on a temporary basis. Another would be an ordained or licensed minister already appointed as pastor of one church, who would agree to serve concurrently another on a temporary basis, when it would not be advantageous to join the two churches as a circuit.)
- (2) Wesleyan ordained or commissioned ministers on loan from one district to another.
- (3) Commissioned or licensed special workers.
- (4) Ministers in process of transfer from other denominations.
- (5) Ministers who belong to other denominations.
- (6) Lay ministers or ministerial students. (In practice, the list of persons eligible for appointment as supply pastor given in *Discipline* 3260:1 is not considered to be exhaustive but is enlarged to include these.)

MMP-424. Ministerial students or licensed ministers, who are members of one district but who are enrolled at a Wesleyan university, Wesley Seminary or approved seminary in another district, may be employed by a Wesleyan church outside of their home district and serve as supply pastors under the following conditions:

- (1) Such arrangements have the written approval of the superintendent of each district involved, and do not continue beyond the next session of the district conference in which they hold their membership without the consent of their district conference (cf. *Disc.* 1396: I: A: 2b; 3100:2; 3260: 1).
- (2) Such arrangements when given the consent of the district conference may be extended through the training period of the minister on a yearly basis subject only to the annual review of their district conference.
- (3) Such persons will be considered to be "on loan" and to be maintaining a "supply" relationship.
- (4) Such persons shall continue under the supervision of the board of administration and board of ministerial development of their home district relative to their district Membership and ministerial appointment and standing, and shall be subject to the supervision of the superintendent and board of administration of the district where they are employed relative to the responsibilities of their employment.
- (5) The extent to which such service in another district will count toward service requirements for ordination will be determined by the board of ministerial development of the home district in accord with the provisions of *Discipline* 3070:2 and MMP-286-290.

MMP-425. Supply pastors serve subject to the following regulations:

- (1) They are appointed temporarily to fill the pulpit and provide a spiritual ministry. They do not have authority to administer the sacraments, unless special authorization is granted by the district superintendent because the supply pastor is serving a congregation isolated from Wesleyan ministers, making it difficult to provide for administering the sacraments (*Disc.* 3260:2), or to perform marriages unless they have that right on some other basis. They shall not perform the administrative function of the pastor except in the filing of reports unless authorized to do so by the district superintendent.
- (2) Their church membership shall not be automatically transferred to the church they are serving.
- (3) They shall be granted a certificate of authorization to supply (see *Disc.* 6240).

- (4) They shall be nonvoting members of the district conference unless they are voting members by some other right.
- (5) They may be removed or replaced as supply pastors at any time by the district board of administration.

Chapter 5 Special Lay Ministries

General Provisions

MMP-501. There are three types of lay ministry which are credentialed by The Wesleyan Church: lay minister, special worker, and lay missionary. For lay ministers, the education requirements have been developed (see MMP-515). For special workers, education requirements have also been developed (see Figure 5). For lay missionaries, no special educational program is provided by the Church with the exception of requirements which may be made by the division under which they serve. While Wesleyan universities and approved seminaries offer courses which would cover most of the education requirements for licensing as a lay minister or commissioning as a special worker, no denominational program of ministerial student aid are available to assist the candidate in institutional preparation.

Function of Lay Ministers

MMP-511. Lay ministers are lay members of The Wesleyan Church whom local church conferences have licensed to preach or serve, under their pastor's direction and as opportunity affords, thus providing for the employment and development of their gifts and usefulness. The lay minister's license and education requirements are not intended as part of the district program of ministerial license, commissioning, or ordination. Normally lay ministers have no plans for ministry except in connection with their local churches.

Steps to Licensing as a Lay Minister

MMP-513. The steps by which Wesleyan lay persons proceed toward licensing as lay ministers are as follows:

- (1) Membership in a local Wesleyan church
- (2) Application through the pastor by the applicant for licensing as a lay minister, or recommendation by the pastor for licensing.
- (3) Examination by the local board of administration as to the candidate's gifts and graces, spiritual and personal qualifications for such a license.
- (4) Recommendation by the local board of administration to the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) that the candidate be licensed as a lay minister.
- (5) Approval voted by the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) for the issuance of the license.
- (6) Signing and issuance of the license by the pastor and local church secretary, using the proper form (see *Disc.* 6200).
- (7) Enroll with Education and Clergy Development.
- (8) Complete 2 courses per year until they have completed the education requirements for lay ministers.
- (9) Annual renewal of their licenses by the local church conference (or the LBA if authorized by the LCC).

Development and Service of a Lay Minister

MMP-515. Once Wesleyan lay persons have been licensed as lay ministers, they are to enroll immediately with Education and Clergy Development at The Wesleyan Church headquarters, and pursue the lay minister's education requirements. These education requirements entail competencies represented by five courses:

- One bible elective from
 - Old Testament Introduction,
 - New Testament Introduction, or

- Methods of Bible Study.
- Introduction to Theology
- Wesleyan Church History and Discipline
- Two further courses selected by the candidate in consultation with their local Wesleyan church from among the remaining ordination courses:
 - PE1 – Lay Minister Elective 1
 - PE2 – Lay Minister Elective 2

If at all possible, the education requirements should be completed at a Wesleyan university. If this is not possible, the education requirements may be taken through Ministry Training Programs. A minimum of two courses must be completed each year until Education and Clergy Development issues the candidate a certificate showing that the program of study has been completed.

MMP-519. Lay ministers are to assist the pastor of their local church as the pastor shall direct, preaching as often as opportunity affords, or serving in other ways befitting their gifts and local needs. They are to report on the progress of their studies and the nature and extent of their labors to their pastor and the local board of administration as they require. They are to make an annual report to their local church conference. They may be asked by the district to serve as a supply pastor. They have no authority to solemnize marriages or to administer the sacraments. They are not members of their local board of administration unless they are elected to membership on the board, and they are not members of their district conference unless they are elected as delegates to their conference. Their license may be revoked upon the recommendation of their local board of administration and a majority vote of their local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA). If they transfer their local church membership, they may also ask for a letter of standing as a lay minister and present it to the pastor of the church to which they are moving their membership for consideration there (see *Disc.* 6220).

MMP-521. Lay ministers' licenses are valid for only one year. They may be renewed indefinitely by their local church conference (or by the LBA if authorized by the LCC) for one year at a time if their holders have served satisfactorily under the pastor's direction, if there is promise of continued usefulness, and if they have completed in the preceding year at least two courses from the lay minister education requirements or a certified for credentialing date in the Ministerial Development Portal from Education and Clergy Development attesting to the completion of the education requirements.

Function of Special Workers

MMP-526. Special Workers are lay persons who believe that they are divinely led to serve the Church in a special lay ministerial capacity, and who have been authorized to carry on such work by a district conference.

Licensed Special Workers

MMP-531. Persons may be licensed by their district conference as licensed special workers through the following steps:

- (1) Membership in a local Wesleyan Church within the district granting the license.
- (2) Examination by the local board of administration.
- (3) Recommendation by the local board of administration to the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) that the candidates be recommended to the district conference for district license as licensed special workers.
- (4) Vote by the local church conference (unless authorization has been granted to the LBA) to make the recommendation to the district conference.
- (5) Filing of the recommendation by the pastor and the local church secretary with the district board of ministerial development (see *Disc.* 6420).

- (6) Enroll with Education and Clergy Development
- (7) Readiness on the part of the candidates to pursue the education requirements for their particular field of service (see Figure 5).
- (8) Examination by the DBMD concerning their Christian experience, gifts, calling, and experience in their particular field of service.
- (9) Recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for the granting of the license.
- (10) Adoption by vote of the district conference of the recommendation of the DBMD.
- (11) Issuance and signing of the license by the district superintendent and the district secretary (see *Disc.* 6360;
- (12) Completion of the education requirements for Special Workers as attested by Education and Clergy Development through an certified for credentialing date in the Ministerial Development Portal.
- (13) Satisfactory service each year.
- (14) Annual renewal of license

Figure 4 Education Requirements for Special Workers

The following education requirements shall constitute the education requirements for the Special Worker credential:

Christian Education

Doctrine of Holiness

Evangelism & Church Health

Introduction to New Testament, Introduction to Old Testament

Introduction to Theology

Methods of Bible Study

Wesleyan History & Discipline

Select two elective courses or 4 elective statements from amongst the remaining ordination courses:

SWE1 - Special Worker Elective 1 (course)

SWE2 - Special Worker Elective 1 (course)

MMP-532. Licensed special workers serve under the direction of their pastor, or upon the call of local churches, or under a district or general church agency, as the case may be. They shall be nonvoting members of their district conference.

MMP-533. Licensed special workers shall be responsible to cooperate fully with their DBMD and Education and Clergy Development in obtaining an annual report on their progress toward the Special Worker education requirements. They shall also report to the district superintendent and the DBMD in any other ways they shall require, shall file the proper annual service report form with the DBMD, and shall report annually to the district conference. As long as they continue to qualify, their service is satisfactory, all reports are properly made, and they complete at least two courses per year or have a certified for credentialing date in the Ministerial Development Portal from Education and Clergy Development showing that they have completed education requirements; their license may be renewed annually. (If licensed special workers fail to file their annual service reports, unless such failure is due to illness, injury, or a similar emergency, their license shall not be renewed.) They are amenable to the district which grants their license, and their license may be revoked between sessions of the district conference by judicial process (see *Disc.* 5170-5180). Licensed special workers transferring from one district to another require only a letter of transfer from their district superintendent (*Disc.* 3480), but when transferring from another denomination are subject to the same regulations as ministers (MMP-41 1-413).

Commissioning of Special Workers

MMP-536. District commissioning of special workers requires the following steps:

- (1) Membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting commissioning.
- (2) Satisfactory completion of at least two years of service as a licensed special worker.
- (3) Certificate from Education and Clergy Development showing completion of the education requirements for special workers or its equivalent.
- (4) Examination by the district board of ministerial development relative to their Christian experience, gifts, calling, and experience in their particular field of service.
- (5) Recommendation by the DBMD to the district conference for commissioning.
- (6) Adoption of the recommendation by vote of the district conference.
- (7) Public service of commissioning (see *Disc.* 5855).
- (8) Issuance and signing of a commission by the general superintendent over the district, the district superintendent, and the district secretary (see *Disc.* 6380).

MMP-537. Special workers' commissions shall be continuous until such time as they cease to be active in their particular field of service and file their commission with the district superintendent, or unless they are deprived of their commission by judicial process (*Disc.* 5170-5180). Persons from other denominations holding commissions as special workers or its equivalent may be received into The Wesleyan Church subject to the regulations which govern the reception of ordained ministers (MMP-411, 413).

Spouses in Ministry

MMP-539. Wives or husbands of Wesleyan ministers have a choice of ways in which to co labor with those ministers. Spouses of ministers may also seek licensing, commissioning, or ordination as ministers. Or they may choose to serve in a strictly lay capacity, as any active lay member might do. Or they may choose to seek license and eventual commission as a "special worker-spouse in ministry." This is especially appropriate for those spouses who do not sense a call to the ministry in its full-orbed function, but do sense a call to a supportive team ministry.

MMP-540. If both husbands and wives are credentialed ministers, they may be appointed as pastors to the same local church with one of them designated as senior pastor. However, the local church conference may vote to call them as co-pastors (*Disc.* 738). In this case, only one shall be designated to serve as chair of the local board of administration, while the other may attend its meetings as a non-voting member (*Disc.* 752).

Lay Missionary

MMP-541. Lay persons who have been appointed by the General Board to serve under Global Partners, or under the Division of Church Multiplication and Discipleship, may be commissioned by their district conference as lay missionaries after examination by their DBMD (MMP-735:3). No educational program is provided by the denomination except such as is required by the involved division. (The commissioning service is covered in *Disc.* 5855; for the commission itself, see *Disc.* 6400)

Chapter 6 Lifelong Learning

Upgrading of Basic Preparation

MMP-601. Since The Wesleyan Church is committed to excellence in terms of academic preparation for the ministry, it makes certain provisions for the upgrading of the basic preparation for ministry, even after the formal act of credentialing has taken place. Student aid in the form of loan/grants is available to ordained or commissioned ministers who return to a Wesleyan University and/or approved seminary to complete their degrees if these degrees are those normally used to complete the education requirements in Track 1 (MMP-263) or Track 2 (MMP-265).

MMP-603. Ordained ministers without other appointments who enroll in a seminary or other graduate school for advanced training for church service shall be listed by their district conference as ordained ministers on educational leave. An ordained minister so appointed shall be a voting member of the district conference.

Continuing Education

MMP-611. The basic or ordination education requirements for a Wesleyan minister is not looked upon as something complete in itself. It is looked upon rather as part of a pattern of lifelong learning in which Wesleyan ministers constantly seek to improve their gifts, abilities, and skills for service. The basic preparation lays the foundation upon which continuing education will build to help ministers meet their ongoing and changing needs.

MMP-615. Continuing education for Wesleyan ministers and special workers is available in many forms:

- (1) Wesleyan universities and the approved seminaries offer various education opportunities.
- (2) Districts offer various programs and opportunities for training through district ministerial conventions, ministerial retreats, seminars, and workshops.
- (3) HQ Divisions offer various forms of continuing education related to church planting, leadership, spiritual formation, and various facets of ministry.
- (4) Education and Clergy Development offers resources and training opportunities to develop the well-being of the pastor as a person. See <https://www.wesleyan.org/ecd/clergy-care-programs-resources> for more information.
- (5) Many communities have class offerings in community colleges, adult education, and the university and seminary programs of other denominations which are readily adaptable as continuing education for Wesleyan ministers and special workers.

MMP-621. Continuing education is a matter which is largely self-motivated and self-disciplined. One of the best ways for ministers to assure their own personal spiritual and intellectual growth is to draw up, with the counsel of their district superintendents, DBMD, district pastoral cohorts, (or other persons to whom they may be accountable), a growth contract. The growth contract should determine a specific time frame, identify strengths and weaknesses, set goals, and specify steps which *will* be taken to capitalize on strengths, overcome weaknesses, and achieve goals. When the time period has been completed, evaluation needs to take place and a new growth contract needs to be drawn up. It would be well for district superintendents also to draw up personal growth contracts with the counsel of the general superintendent.

District Board of Ministerial Development

Function

MMP-701. There shall be a district board of ministerial development which shall be responsible

- (1) For the examination and recommendation to the district conference of all candidates for ordination, license, commission, ministerial study, reinstatement, restoration, or transfer from another denomination
- (2) To review the work of each person under appointment by the district as revealed through the annual service reports, and to report its findings to the district board of administration and the district conference
- (3) To cooperate with the district superintendent and the district board of administration in the personal and professional development of ministers within the district.

Membership and Organization

MMP-706. The district board of ministerial development shall consist of the district superintendent, the assistant district superintendent (if the district conference chooses to elect a person to this office), and in addition, the district board of administration shall elect as many additional members as deemed sufficient. At least two members shall be from among the laity, and the ministerial members shall be ordained ministers. The term of office for the elected members shall be for three years, with the election so arranged that approximately one-third shall be elected each year.

MMP-708. District superintendents shall be the chairs unless they shall appoint another to serve in their place with such appointment subject to ratification by the district board of administration. The board shall annually elect a vice-chair and a secretary from among its members.

MMP-710. The board may divide into smaller groups and apportion the work among them as deemed necessary, provided that all recommendations of the board to the district conference, or *in* the interim of its sessions to the district board of administration, shall be adopted at a meeting of the full board. Such a division and delegation of the workload will be especially helpful in the annual interviews of candidates, particularly if the district covers a large geographical area, and in the preliminary review of the annual service reports.

Sessions

MMP-716. The district board of ministerial development shall be convened by its chair in sufficient time before the opening of the district conference to enable the board to complete its work in a careful and thorough manner, and shall meet at other times as deemed necessary upon the call of the chair.

MMP-718. Since the vice-chair and secretary are elected annually, it would be well for the DBMD to hold an organizational session following the completion of elections by the district board of administration. Meeting dates for the entire year might be set at this time, and the division of the board into subcommittees and the delegation of responsibilities might also be cared for at this time.

MMP-720. Sessions of the DBMD may also be necessary during the year to consider interim recommendations for ordination, commissioning, licensing, or other such matters, to the district board of administration.

MMP-722. One or more sessions of the DBMD will be necessary prior to the annual session of the district conference to conduct interviews with *all* persons who are candidates for ordination, commission, reinstatement, restoration, or transfer from another denomination, and with all candidates for initial license of any type and candidates for renewal of license. The scheduling of such session(s), which is subject to the

approval of the district board of administration, should be made and announced as early as possible after the date of the district conference has been fixed. At the same or other session(s) the DBMD will need to process the annual service reports. Sufficient time will need to be planned between these sessions and the convening of the district conference to allow for interviews by the DBMD or a subcommittee with persons making unsatisfactory reports. And sufficient time will need to be allowed after the completion of all work and the filing of a report with the district board of administration relative to matters affecting district appointments (MMP-761: 1) for the DBA to properly do its work and prepare its comprehensive report on pastoral relations and ministerial appointments (Disc. 1233:9abc).

MMP-724. Education and Clergy Development needs a minimum of one month's time between the completion of education requirements by a candidate and the beginning of the conference session at which the DBMD will be making a report and recommendation concerning that candidate, to assure the accurate and orderly posting of completions to Credential Transcripts in the Ministerial Development Portal and the noting of dates for certification for those who have completed the education requirements for licensing or credentialing.. Neither a DBMD nor a candidate should count on work being posted to a Credential Transcript in time to affect licensing, commissioning, or ordination if the work is completed later than the date one month prior to the convening of the annual district conference session. If the DBMD needs more time than this to complete its work and allow sufficient time for the DBA to do its work, then the DBMD should set an earlier deadline for candidates to complete their work and communicate the same to them.

Duties of DBMD Chair

MMP-726. District superintendents or their appointees (see MMP-708) serve as the chairs of the district board of ministerial development. The duties of the chair include:

- (1) To become familiar with the *Discipline* regulations for candidates; the *Discipline* regulations for the DBMD; and with the *Manual of Ministerial Preparation*.
- (2) To preside over sessions of the DBMD and to authorize the DBMD secretary to call special sessions as needed.
- (3) To lead the DBMD in the conducting of interviews with all persons who appear before the board, unless the board shall adopt a plan for sharing or delegating such leadership.
- (4) To arrange with the district board of administration for a system of funding DBMD expenses.
- (5) To maintain liaison between the DBMD and the district board of administration.
- (6) To see that each member of the DBMD has a copy of the *Manual of Ministerial Preparation* which is digitally available at <https://www.wesleyan.org/eccd/ministerial-preparation>.
- (7) To counsel those individuals who are responsible to the DBMD relative to matters which are under the jurisdiction of the DBMD.
- (8) To work closely with the DBMD secretary in developing agendas, scheduling interviews, and in the preparation of reports to the district board of administration, the district conference, and Education and Clergy Development.

Duties of DBMD Secretary

MMP-728. The district board of ministerial development shall elect a secretary from among its members annually. Duties of the secretary shall include:

- (1) To issue notices of all board meetings and notices to all persons who are to appear before the DBMD.
- (2) To keep suitable and permanent records which shall be the property of the district and shall be preserved as directed by the district superintendent and the district board of administration. Files may be uploaded to the TWCHub to a person's candidate record for maintaining a digital file. Districts who create their own digital filing system are encouraged to follow industry standards for protecting and securing confidential information.
- (3) To maintain a correct and complete journal of the proceedings of DBMD meetings, an official copy

of which shall be submitted to the district secretary for permanent filing.

- (4) To maintain a file on each candidate or other person seeking certification from the district, including cooperation with Education and Clergy Development to maintain a record on the Ministerial Development Portal of ministerial studies and training carried on in a Wesleyan University, Approved Seminary, or by Ministry Training Programs with Education and Clergy Development. The DBMD secretary shall assist the DBMD in accessing candidate records and Credential Transcripts in the Ministerial Development Portal to aid the DBMD in considering its recommendations to the district conference. The DBMD Secretary shall provide to the DBMD, with assistance from the district administrator, a record from the TWCHub of each candidate's service record under appointment by the district.
- (5) To maintain a personnel record of each ordained, licensed, or commissioned member of the district, on DBMD forms as authorized by the General Board and administered by Education and Clergy Development, including: important personal and family information; educational qualifications; ministerial service including pastoral and other district appointments, offices held, and credentials issued by the district. Whenever a letter of transfer is granted, a transcript of the personnel record shall be provided, if requested, but the record shall remain in the permanent files of the district. A district may create additional questionnaires for candidates to complete in addition to the General Board approved DBMD forms, so long as the content of the General Board forms are used verbatim by candidates and DBMDs. Similarly, a district may prepare a digital version of the General Board approved forms so long as the content of the forms remains the same and proper industry-standard precautions are followed to protect confidential and personal information.
- (6) To report each year to Education and Clergy Development by updating each candidate's contact, credential, appointment, and credential records on the TWCHub and Ministerial Development Portal, following the annual district conference session, for all persons recognized by the district as ministerial students, licensed ministers, ordained ministers in process of transfer, licensed ministers in process of transfer, and licensed special workers, so Education and Clergy Development can provide updated education information, certification dates and Credential transcripts for these persons in their education requirements on the TWCHub and Ministerial Development Portal.
- (7) To ensure the Anticipated Credentialing Date on the candidate record in the TWCHub or Ministerial Development Portal is updated appropriately at least 60 days prior to the district conference for those persons the district board of ministerial development intends to ordain, commission or issue validation (for transferring) of ordination, commissioning or licensing so Education and Clergy Development can be certain that candidates have completed the education requirements for such credentials. This will also form the basis for a report for the General Superintendent's office in anticipation of ordination services.
- (8) To assist the district superintendent in providing for licensed ministers or licensed special workers transferring to other districts of The Wesleyan Church properly attested statements of their record of service under the appointment of the district conference. Assist Education and Clergy Development in providing any documentation or cooperation needed to ensure Credential Transcripts on the Ministerial Development Portal are updated and accurate for those transferring to other districts.
- (9) To direct candidates to the various questionnaires approved by the General Board for use in examining candidates aiming at ordination or commissioning and to distribute the same as needed (see Figure 6). These are provided by Education and Clergy Development on the Ministerial Development Portal or at <https://www.wesleyan.org/ecd/ministerial-preparation>.
- (10) To assist the DBMD chair in developing agendas for DBMD sessions and in scheduling interviews with persons who are to appear before the DBMD
- (11) To prepare, in consultation with the DBMD chair, the various reports to the district board of administration and the district conference (MMP-761).

- (12) To cooperate with the district secretary to insure appropriate certificates are ordered in preparation for commissioning and ordination services.

Responsibilities to Candidates

MMP-731. The district board of ministerial development is the district body charged with overseeing the development and progress of candidates up to and following ordination, commissioning, recognition of transfer with full standing, reinstatement, or restoration. It is responsible to test strengths and weaknesses, counsel them, encourage them, direct their academic preparation in cooperation with Education and Clergy Development, guiding them in personal, social, spiritual, and leadership development, and making recommendations relative to their readiness for and advancement in ministry.

MMP-733. The DBMD begins its work with candidates or changes phases of work with candidates when it receives:

- (1) Recommendations from the local churches of candidates for licensing as ministerial students, licensed ministers, or licensed special workers, or for reinstatement or restoration.
- (2) A report from the district superintendent, along with copies of credentials, transcripts, and other supporting documents, concerning unordained or uncommissioned persons seeking transfer from other denominations.
- (3) A report from the district superintendent relative to licensed persons transferring from other districts, along with properly attested statements of their standing in the ministerial education requirements and of their record of service under appointment as supplied by their former district superintendent and former DBMD.
- (4) A report from the district superintendent, along with copies of credentials, transcripts, and other supporting documents, concerning ordained or commissioned persons seeking transfer from other denominations.
- (5) A report from the district superintendent that the DBA has recommended that certain licensed ministers called later in life be considered for commissioning as commissioned ministers.
- (6) A report from Global Partners or the Division of Church Multiplication and Discipleship concerning the employment of lay members of churches within the district as missionaries.
- (7) A proposal from one of its own members that licensed ministers who have exhausted the seven years allowed under district appointment for the completion of education requirements for ordination be considered for commissioning as commissioned ministers.

Figure 5 DBMD Forms for Use in Examining Candidates for Ministry

Form Number	Name	When Used	Number needed per candidate
DBMD No. 1	Personal Data Inventory	When seeking initial licensing	1
DBMD No. 2	Initial Reference	At same time as DBMD No. 1	4
DBMD No. 3	Subsequent Years	At discretion of DBMD	1 (per year)
DBMD No. 4	Ordained Minister's Reference	Prior to ordination or commissioning	4
DBMD No. 5	Ordination Application Questionnaire	Prior to ordination or commissioning	1
DBMD No. 6	Credentialed Minister in Process of Transfer (into TWC)	Prior to validation of credentials (ordination, commissioning, or licensing)	1

Forms are available on the Ministerial Development Portal or at <https://www.wesleyan.org/ecd/ministerial-preparation>

MMP-735. The DBMD is responsible to consider and/or examine candidates through personal interview, initially and *also* annually, with special types of examination at specific points of change in status. The General Board has approved various questionnaires for use in examining candidates aiming at ordination, commissioning or validation which will be helpful to the DBMD in fulfilling this responsibility (see Figure 6, "Questionnaires for use in Examining Candidates for the Ministry"). The DBMD is responsible:

- (1) To examine candidates for license as ministerial students relative to their qualifications for the ministry including their personal religious experience, ministerial call, and evidence thereof. (The forms designated DBMD Numbers 1 and 2 are to be used in connection with the initial interview and Number 3 is to be used in subsequent years depending upon the length of time spent in this category-see Figure 6.)
- (2) To examine candidates for the granting of license as licensed ministers or licensed special workers (initially, annually, and as they move on to become candidates for ordination or commissioning), and for commissioning as lay missionaries. Examinations should be conducted both through interviews and as otherwise needed. The interviews should deal with their personal experience of salvation and entire sanctification, their full commitment to the Articles of Religion, Membership Commitments, Elementary Principles, and polity of The Wesleyan Church and acceptance of its authority, and their evidence of having the qualifications for the ministry to which they feel called as set forth in *The Discipline*.
- (3) To examine candidates for the granting of license as licensed ministers in keeping with (4) above and relative to their personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof, matters of education, doctrine and practice, and circumstances of personal, family, and business life which bear upon the ministry. (The forms designated DBMD Numbers 1 and 2 should be used in connection with the initial interview, and Numbers 3, 4, and 5 should also be used in keeping with their intended purpose -see Figure 6.)
- (4) To examine candidates for licensing or commissioning as special workers in keeping with (3) above and relative to their Christian experience, gifts, calling, and experience in their particular field of service.
- (5) To examine candidates for election to the ordained ministry or for commissioning as commissioned ministers in keeping with (3) above and relative to their personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof, matters of education, doctrine, and practice, particularly their personal commitment without reservation to each of the Articles of Religion and the Membership Commitments and their loyalty to The Wesleyan Church, and circumstances of personal, family, and business life which bear upon the ministry. (The forms designated DBMD Numbers 4 and 5 should be used at this point -see Figure 5)
- (6) To examine candidates for transfer from other denominations under ordination or commission or license in keeping with (4), (5), or (6) above, whichever applies. The form designated DBMD number 6 should be used at this point
- (7) To consider and examine any person applying for reinstatement or restoration of ministerial credentials as directed by the restoration plan developed by the district under the direction of the General Superintendent (cf. *Disc.* 3120-3148; 3490, last sentence).

MMP-737. The DBMD is responsible for helping candidates progress toward their goals as follows:

- (1) To encourage all who are completing education requirements to enroll in one of the universities of The Wesleyan Church or in an approved seminary.
- (2) To grant approval for candidates to substitute Ministry Training Programs for attendance at a Wesleyan institution only if extenuating circumstances make such attendance extremely difficult.

Candidates who receive such permission are to be encouraged by the DBMD to secure training in such general education courses as grammar, literature, and history in a university, especially in any subject in which their deficiency is apparent.

- (3) To supervise and counsel all who are completing education requirements and cooperating with Education and Clergy Development in all such matters.
- (4) To supervise the completion of the supervised ministry education requirement for those pursuing the supervised ministry through an approved Ministry Training Program.
- (5) To consider providing Ministry Training Program classes for those so approved, within the guidelines established by Education and Clergy Development and subject to the counsel and approval of the Director of Ministerial Preparation.
- (6) To refer all questions about the evaluation of transcripts and other records of academic work to Education and Clergy Development for its decision as to further requirements.
- (7) To define "full-time service" as it relates to the earning of service requirements toward ordination or commissioning.
- (8) To evaluate the service of each candidate in terms of its meeting requirements for ordination or commissioning and as to the amount of credit earned through full-time or part-time service.
- (9) To issue through its secretary and in cooperation with the district superintendent properly attested statements of record of service under the appointment of the district conference for all licensed persons transferring to other districts. To cooperate with Education and Clergy Development in providing documentation for updated and accurate Credential Transcripts on the Ministerial Development Portal.

MMP-739. The district board of ministerial development is responsible to recommend to the district conference only those candidates for ordination, license, commission, ministerial study, reinstatement, restoration, or transfer from other denominations which it believes to be fully qualified for the recognition it is recommending. It may recommend to the district conference that candidates be granted a different form of recognition than that recommended by their local church conference (a candidate recommended by the local church conference for license as a licensed minister may be recommended by the DBMD for license a ministerial student). Continuation in the process is never to be thought of as automatic just because so many education requirements have been completed or so much service credit has been earned; the DBMD must also be ready to recommend candidates as completely qualified in every way. Recommendation for commissioning as a commissioned minister is not to be given automatically at the expiration of six years of service under license and appointment or at the expiration of the maximum of seven years as a licensed minister. It is to be given only in those cases in which the DBMD after consultation with the DBA believes that this is the proper course for persons to follow in the light of their gifts and circumstances.

Responsibilities to All Ministries

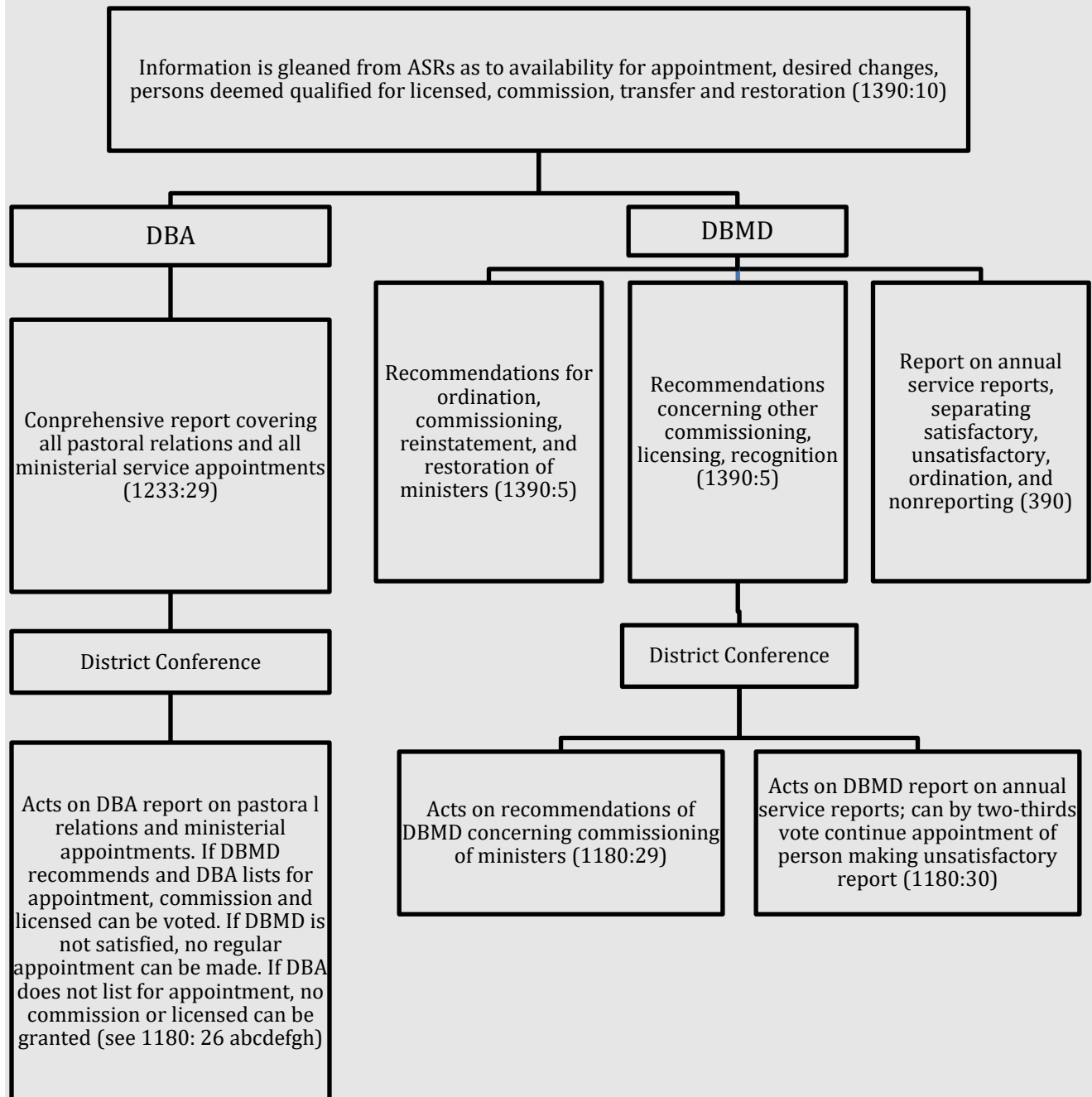
MMP-751. The district board of ministerial development is to receive on behalf of the district conference a written annual service report from each ordained minister, commissioned minister, licensed minister, ministerial student, and commissioned and licensed special worker. The reports are to be made on forms authorized by the General Board and made available by the General Secretary. Those serving as pastors or senior pastors use the "Pastor's Annual Service Report;" associate and assistant pastors use the "Associate/Assistant Pastor's Annual Service Report;" ministerial students use the "Ministerial Student's Annual Service Report;" retired ministers use the "Retired Minister's Annual Service Report;" other ordained, commissioned, or licensed ministers use the "Minister's Annual Service Report;" and special workers use the "Lay Worker's Annual Service Report." The DBMD should set a deadline for the submission of these reports early enough to allow it to complete its work and make the proper reports to the district board of administration and the district conference. The manner of transmitting the report forms to the persons responsible to submit them and any other matters not clearly the prerogative of the DBMD

shall be determined by the district board of administration or the district superintendent.

MMP-753. The DBMD shall review all service reports and pass on each one as follows:

- (1) A report which shows that the person 's assigned work has been done in keeping with the *Discipline* and that any required statistical report has been properly submitted shall be marked as approved and returned to the person submitting it.
- (2) A report in which there are unsatisfactory answers, or which shows that the work has not been done in keeping with the *Discipline*, or that a required statistical report has not been properly submitted, shall be reviewed with the person submitting the report. If after such interview the answers are still unsatisfactory, the report shall be so marked and returned to the person submitting it.
- (3) In case of the failure to submit an annual service report on the part of any person responsible to do so, the DBMD shall investigate the reason for such failure. In the case of licensed persons failing to make the annual service report, unless such failure is due to illness, injury, or a similar emergency, the DBMD shall not recommend the renewal of their licenses. In the case of ordained or commissioned persons failing to make the annual service report other than as the result of such extenuating circumstances, this fact shall be reported by the DBMD to the district conference. If such failure is persisted in for two years, the DBMD shall notify the involved persons and request them to report the following year. If they still fail to report, they shall be declared withdrawn from the district and their names shall be so entered upon the minutes of the district conference.

Figure 6 Procedure for arriving at District Conference Decisions Relative to Pastoral Relations and Ministerial Standing and Appointments



MMP-754. The DBMD is to cooperate with the district superintendent and the district board of administration in providing opportunities for the personal and professional growth of ministers within the district. The activities of the district board of ministerial development may include individual or group interviews, assessments, growth contracts, seminars, or other means of assisting ministers to achieve their full potential for ministry (*Disc.* 1390:1 1).

DBMD Reports

MMP- 761. Besides such interim reports to the district board of administration as circumstances may call for, the district board of ministerial development is responsible for four reports as a result of its annual work. (See Figure 6.)

- (1) It is to report to the district board of administration, sufficiently in advance of the district conference session for the DBA to complete the preparation of its comprehensive report on pastoral appointments and ministerial relations, information gleaned from the annual service reports and from its own decisions as to recommendations to the district conference as follows: (a) the results of the examination of the annual service reports; (b) the availability for appointment, and any desired changes in appointment or district conference relations, as recorded on the annual service reports; (c) those persons qualified for a district ministerial license the granting of which shall become effective upon their appointment; (d) those other persons qualified for a license or commission, for reception from another district or denomination, or for restoration.
- (2) It is to report to the district conference, early in the session, all persons recommended for ordination, commission, reinstatement, or restoration of ministerial credentials, so that the district conference may approve such as it will and thus facilitate the planning of the services of ordination and commissioning.
- (3) It is to report to the district conference subsequently all other recommendations concerning the licensing, recognition of ministers, and special workers, and the licensing of ministerial students. If persons recommended for license as licensed ministers do not receive an appointment from the district conference, the DBMD report shall be edited to list them as ministerial students or in other appropriate categories.
- (4) It is to report to the district conference the results of the examination of the annual service reports, listing the names of all those who submitted satisfactory reports (including those initially satisfactory and those rendered satisfactory after interview), the names of those whose reports remained unsatisfactory after interview, and the names of those who did not report (listing separately those whose failure to submit is excusable because of extenuating circumstances, those whose licenses are not being renewed, those ordained *or* commissioned persons whose reports have not been submitted and the number of years involved, and those ordained and commissioned persons who should be declared withdrawn).

Council of Ordination

MMP-766. Each district shall provide for a council of ordination to assist the general superintendent and district superintendent in carrying out the will of the district conference in the ordination of those elected to the ordained ministry, and the commissioning of those elected thereto as commissioned ministers, special workers, and lay missionaries. The council of ordination may consist of the desired number of ordained ministers appointed by the district board of administration, or the district conference may designate the ordained ministers of the district board of ministerial development as the council of ordination.

MMP-768. The public service of ordination shall be presided over by the general superintendent or a representative appointed by the general superintendent. The council of ordination should work with the general superintendent and district superintendent in planning the service of ordination and commissioning as a very significant time of worship, inspiration, and challenge. The service shall be planned by the district superintendent and the council of ordination; the time and place shall be subject to the approval of the general superintendent. The general superintendent shall deliver the ordination sermon except when delegating that responsibility to another. A special ritual of ordination (pars. 5750-5772) and another for the commissioning of ministers (pars. 5800-5845) are provided in the *Discipline*. Those portions entitled, "Examination of Candidates" (pars. 5772 and 5825). Have the authority of statutory law and must be followed as prescribed. For the rest a measure of flexibility is permitted as long as nothing contradicts the Articles of Religion or any other part of the Constitution.

Appendix A Definition of Ministerial Service

General Guidelines

In determining the qualifications of ordained ministers to be placed on the appointed list, or of commissioned ministers to be considered as in ministerial service, or of licensed ministers to have their service counted toward the meeting of ordination requirements, district boards of administration and ministerial development shall be guided by whether the service rendered is essentially "in a ministerial capacity." Generally speaking, service "in a ministerial capacity" is that for which ministerial training, ordination or commissioning, and status are either required, desirable, or significantly advantageous. If the position could be filled quite as well by a person without ministerial training, ordination or commissioning, or status, the service should not be counted as being "in a ministerial capacity."

More specifically, service which involves preaching the Word, directing worship, and administering the sacraments and ordinances of the Church is ministerial in nature; therefore pastors, evangelists, and military and institutional chaplains clearly qualify as serving "in a ministerial capacity."

In addition, those who are involved in the top administrative posts of church-related institutions; teaching Bible, religion, or ministerial training courses; serving in a religious ministry to persons, including personal and family counseling; or serving in secondary administrative posts in which they deal heavily with religious matters rather than essentially fiscal, technical, or mechanical functions, should be considered as rendering service "in a ministerial capacity."

Also, if one spouse is engaged in ministerial service and is under such appointment by the district conference, and the other spouse has ministerial calling, training, and appropriate status and in a significant manner complements and supplements the religious ministry of her or his spouse, she or he may be appointed as serving "in a ministerial capacity" whether or not a separate remuneration is provided.

In the following paragraphs, attempts are made to specify types of ministry which do and do not qualify as being "in a ministerial capacity." If a specific type does not appear, or if unusual combinations are effected, the guidelines above should be sufficient to make a judgment.

Missionaries

In applying these guidelines to those serving under employment by Global Partners or Evangelism and Church Growth, the following would qualify as serving "in a ministerial capacity": mission coordinators, pastors, evangelists, church planters, top institutional administrators, and teachers in ministerial education, Bible, and religion. The following would not qualify: teachers in elementary or secondary education, college-level teachers other than those mentioned above, and persons in the medical professions or in support ministries such as field engineers and agricultural missionaries.

Educational Institutions

In applying these guidelines to those serving under employment by one of the general educational institutions of The Wesleyan Church or one of the seminaries approved through the Wesleyan Seminary Foundation, the following would qualify as serving "in a ministerial capacity": the president, the academic dean, the dean of students, the chief development or advancement officer, the librarian, personal or religious counselors, the chaplain, the director of church relations, the professors teaching in religion, philosophy, Bible, ministerial training or church music. Others would not qualify unless their service fits the general guidelines.

Local Christian Education Programs

In applying these guidelines to those employed by local churches in special Christian education programs, the following would qualify as serving "in a ministerial capacity": ministers of Christian education, youth and music; the top administrator posts in day schools or daycare programs; teachers whose subject matter is essentially Bible and/or religion-oriented. Others would not qualify unless their service fits under the general guidelines¹.

General and District Administration

In applying these guidelines to those employed by a district, the following would qualify as serving "in a ministerial capacity": district superintendent, full-time assistant district superintendent, full-time district secretary, district director of Christian education, district director of camping, district development officer, district director of extension or church planting. The following would not qualify: office secretary, campground caretaker.

In applying these guidelines to those employed by the general Church, the following would qualify as serving "in a ministerial capacity": general superintendent, other general officers, and those with general officer status; directors/ managers/editors, and supervisors/assistant editors may also qualify if their assignments are not largely limited to fiscal, technical, or mechanical functions. The following would not qualify: office secretaries, machine operators, maintenance personnel, and those whose assignments are largely limited to fiscal, technical, or mechanical functions¹.

Interchurch Service

In applying these guidelines to those engaged in interchurch service, the following would qualify as serving "in a ministerial capacity": pastors, evangelists, institutional chaplains, and any who serve in a manner equivalent to those listed as qualifying above as missionaries, educators, or administrators.

Special Service

The Discipline also provides a category designated as "special service," which opens up the possibility of ministerial service not clearly delineated under any of the above categories (3335). District boards will need to apply carefully the general guidelines given above to determine whether or not a particular kind of service qualifies. The key factor will be whether ministerial training, ordination or commissioning, or status has a significant effect upon the quality of service rendered.

Appendix B – Process for Revision of Education Requirements

Education and Clergy Development shall manage the process for the appropriate revision of the education requirements for credentialing in The Wesleyan Church. The Ministerial Education and Formation Quality Assurance Committee shall assist the Executive Director of Education and Clergy Development by making recommendations for changes according to the following process:

¹ The exclusions set forth in this document relate only to the defining of the term "in a ministerial capacity." In all positions of service at church-related institutions and for church-related agencies, it is expected that employees will be Christians in experience and relationships, and be compatible with the doctrines set forth in *The Discipline of The Wesleyan Church* in the Articles of Religion and Membership Commitments, whether serving in a ministerial capacity or in assignments which are largely fiscal, technical, or mechanical in function.

- (1) The Executive Director of Education and Clergy Development shall establish a formal mechanism for collecting feedback for revisions. Feedback shall be collected from
 - a. Representatives from the religion departments (or the equivalent) from each of the five Wesleyan Universities.
 - b. Representatives from the District, usually the District Superintendent and/or DBMD Chair.
 - c. The Director of Ministerial Education and Credentialing
 - d. Other stakeholders as determined by the Executive Director
- (2) The Executive Director shall be empowered to make editorial changes (non-substantive) to the education requirements.
- (3) The Executive Director shall guide a process for a thorough review of the Education Requirements every eight (8) years. This process shall entail:
 - a. Organization of data collected into a report of key suggestions.
 - b. Formal solicitation of feedback from Wesleyan Ministerial Development Leaders: District Superintendents, DBMD Chairs, Wesleyan University Religion Department Deans, Wesleyan Religion Faculty, and the Director of Ministerial Education and Credentialing.
 - c. The producing of an initial draft by MEF Quality Assurance Committee.
 - d. A formal season of comment from Wesleyan Ministerial Development Leaders
 - e. A second draft produced by the MEF Quality Assurance Committee with a second, albeit more brief, season of comment.
 - f. Recommendation by the MEF Quality Assurance Committee to the Executive Director of final changes to the education requirements.
 - g. Approval of Education Requirements by the Executive Director of Education and Clergy Development and the General Superintendent.
 - h. Formal publishing of the new education requirements by Education and Clergy Development.

Appendix C – Process for Education Pathway Approval and Renewal

Education Pathways are defined in MMP-263 to MMP-276 as approved credential-track degree programs at a Wesleyan University or Approved Seminary as well as ECD-Approved Ministry Training Programs. Education Pathways within The Wesleyan Church must have an established revision cycle for their curriculum as guided by the following:

- (1) It is assumed that a best practice for quality assurance is a continual, recurring, and defined process for reviewing and revising curriculum.
- (2) Most accredited universities and seminaries have a defined review and revision process, e.g., a full-scale review and revision every 7 years. It is advised that a university align their program approval with their pre-existing accreditation and quality assurance process(es).
- (3) Education Pathways must be reviewed and revised and subsequently reassessed by ECD at least once every two quadrenniums (8 years). Most programs will meet this minimum requirement through their normal institutional review and revision cycle.
- (4) When Education Pathways engage in their established recurring revision cycle, they must use the most recent version of The Wesleyan Church education requirements for credentialing.
- (5) Education and Clergy Development is responsible for approving degree-track programs for Approved Seminaries that are outside of The Wesleyan Church, as The Wesleyan Church is often not able to influence the curriculum of such programs. ECD shall determine which degrees qualify as Approved Education Pathways and what additional work must be completed for that degree to

meet the education requirements for credentialing in The Wesleyan Church.

The MEF Quality Assurance Committee

The Ministerial Education and Formation (MEF) Quality Assurance Committee is established and administered by Education and Clergy Development for the approval of Education Pathways that provide ministry education and formation programs that fulfill the education requirements for credentials in The Wesleyan Church.

Education and Clergy Development shall establish a Ministerial Education and Formation Quality Assurance Committee. This committee shall be responsible for making recommendations to the Executive Director for the approval of Education Pathways, whether new programs or those seeking renewal.

MEF Quality Assurance Committee Membership

The membership of this Committee shall consist of

- (1) The Executive Director, Education and Clergy Development
- (2) The Director of Ministerial Education, Education and Clergy Development
- (3) WE5 Religion Deans or their representatives from Wesleyan Educational Institutions as appointed by the Executive Director of Education and Clergy Development.
- (4) Additional members appointed by the Executive Director of Education and Clergy Development from those who serve as religion faculty in our schools of ministry, theology and religion at our Education Institutions, DBMD Chairs, and/or District Superintendents. Consideration is encouraged for those who also serve as pastors in local churches.

MEF Quality Assurance Committee Members' Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the members shall be to

- (1) Understand the nature, purpose and process for approving Education Pathways that meet the education requirements for credentialing in The Wesleyan Church.
- (2) Participate in program evaluation for new or existing Education Pathways seeking approval for fulfilling the education requirements for credentialing in The Wesleyan Church, including the review of curriculum according to the standards for program approval and providing recommendations to the Executive Director of ECD for approval or improvement.
- (3) Provide input into the on-going improvement of the process for Education Pathway approval and renewal outlined in the Manual of Ministerial Preparation.
- (4) Participate in the process for revision of the education requirements as outlined in Appendix B.
- (5) Participate in the process for revision of credentialing forms as outlined in Appendix D.

Appendix D: Process for Revision of credentialing forms (DBMD Forms)

Education and Clergy Development shall oversee the process for recommending revisions to the forms used for credentialing in The Wesleyan Church. The process shall entail:

1. Formal solicitation of feedback from Wesleyan Ministerial Development Leaders: District Superintendents, DBMD members, Wesleyan Religion deans and faculty at Wesleyan Universities, and the Director of Ministerial Education and Credentialing. Incorporation of feedback into revised forms.

2. A formal season of comment from the Wesleyan Ministerial Development Leaders.
3. Submission of recommendations for revisions from the MEF Quality Assurance Committee to the Executive Director of Education and Clergy Development.
4. Approval of the revised forms by the Executive Director of Education and Clergy Development and the General Superintendent.
5. Credentialing forms shall be reviewed at least once every two years.

Approval

General Superintendent

Date

Executive Director, ECD

Date