

Southern Ohio District Church of the Brethren
Guidelines for Licensed Ministers, Congregations, and Mentors

Purpose: It is the stated purpose of the District Ministry Commission to appoint for each Licensed Minister a mentor who shall:

1. Provide the support and caring counsel of a mature and trusted friend.
2. Provide spiritual guidance through dialogue concerning faith issues.
3. Provide guidance for the education/training plan.
4. Provide sensitive, yet candid critique of skills and gifts
5. Provide linkage between the licensed minister and the District.
6. Provide referral to helping resources.

Qualifications of mentors:

1. Be an ordained (active or retired) Church of the Brethren minister with at least five years ministry experience.
2. Not be the current pastor of the licensed minister to provide for a broadened support for the licensed minister and to avoid potential conflict of a supervisory relationship.
3. Be of the personality and maturity necessary to fulfill his/her purpose and responsibilities.
4. Be willing to receive a call to serve from the District Ministry Commission.
5. Be willing to invest up to 5 hours every three months in his/her role as a mentor.

The District Ministry Commission, in consultation with the District Executive Minister, shall:

1. Annually call or reappoint a mentor for each licensed minister.
2. Provide annual evaluation forms to be completed by the licensed minister, mentor, and the congregation to be used in evaluating whether licensing should be continued.
3. Respond promptly to issues or concerns.
4. Provide appropriate materials, information, and support for mentors, licensed ministers, and congregations.

The Licensed Minister shall:

1. Meet with their mentor on a monthly basis or as otherwise arranged. This meeting may be through technology if a face to face meeting would be difficult.
2. Be responsible and prompt in keeping appointments.
3. Follow through with assignments as needed and assist mentor in observing ministry tasks being performed.
4. Be open to dialogue about ministry and faith issues as well as evaluation of personal and professional strengths and weaknesses.
5. Discuss educational/training plan achievements and/or difficulties.
6. Be open to opportunities for growth through referral to and involvement with other helping resources.

The Mentor shall:

1. Initiate a monthly dialogue/support 1-hour session (unless a mutually agreeable alternate arrangements are made.)
2. Observe the licensed minister performing ministry tasks one hour per quarter. (These may be “on the job” or created situations, ie. practice sermons, etc.)

3. Evaluate orally the quarterly observations with the licensed minister.
4. Submit the annual evaluation form to the District Ministry Commission.
5. Make referrals to the District Executive Minister or District Ministry Commission for further counsel regarding the calling to Christian ministry.
6. Make referrals to helping resources for emotional/psychological counseling.
7. Report lack of follow-through or other performance concerns to Ministry Commission.
8. Encourage the congregation to support and utilize the gifts of the licensed minister.
9. Be open to evaluation of performance as a mentor.

The Congregation shall:

1. Covenant to be in prayer and otherwise support the licensed minister.
2. Provide opportunities for the licensed minister to participate in a wide variety of congregational activities under the guidance of the pastor, moderator or other congregational leadership. If the licensed minister is geographically removed from the congregation for education or is serving in another ministry setting, the congregation should maintain contact with the licensed minister regarding such opportunities to participate in ministry activities.
3. Give encouragement to the licentiate for adequate educational preparation for the set apart ministry. The earning of college and seminary degrees or any of the three approved denominationally approved tracks is required.
4. Support the licentiate with financial loans/grants to assist him/her with educational preparation as possible.
5. Arrange for a conversation at least annually with the congregational leadership related to ministerial call and concerns.
6. Submit the annual renewal form to the District Ministry Commission if there is congregational support to do so. If there are concerns regarding continuing the license, congregational leadership should contact the District Executive and/or the District Ministry Commission.