

Circles of Ministry

Each of the ministry circles is designed to effectively form, equip and support ministers for a particular sort of ministry within the denomination. The process of calling forth, training and credentialing leadership into these circles is an important process and requires investment and cooperation from several bodies within the church: an individual, a congregation, a district, the denomination, and a spiritual companion group named the “calling cohort.” Just as the calling process is a mutual endeavor, the life of ministry is also a process of accountability, mutual support and peer relationships – both within and across the different ministry circles.



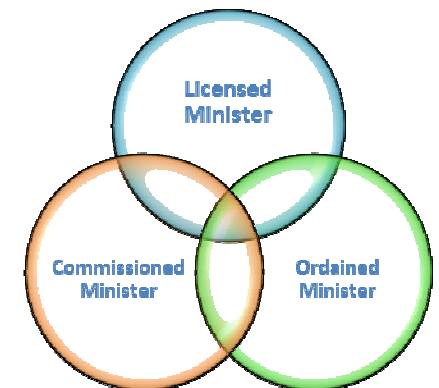
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Church of the Brethren Ministerial Leadership Paper 2013

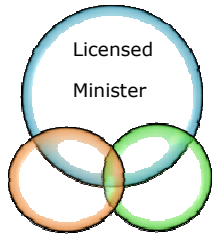
Circles of Ministry



**Enabling the church
to call out more leadership,
to include all in ministry, and
to encourage intentional
discernment of call.**

Licensed Minister

An individual who has been affirmed in her or his continuation of training and discernment toward a particular ministerial leadership role.

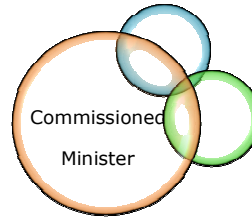


Licensed Ministers are guided by a Covenant of Accountability, which outlines responsibilities during the time of training and formation and provides guidelines and a roadmap toward one of the set-apart ministry circles. The district may annually reaffirm the Licensed Minister up to 9 times (10 years total).

Licensed Ministers are expected to: Continue discerning call, nurture relationships with district and calling cohort, practice ethical and moral integrity, demonstrate qualities and gifts for ministry, be an active member of a congregation, demonstrate commitment to the Church of the Brethren, be enrolled in approved ministry training program, meet regularly with mentor/supervisor, engage in spiritual practices (study, love feast, active prayer life, stewardship, commitment to community/body of Christ), and establish practice of attention to holistic healthfulness.

Commissioned Minister

A minister called to one very specific ministry in one very specific setting.



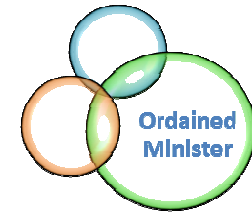
The Church of the Brethren values the small-church setting, and has long encouraged both the practice of calling out those already among us to lead and the value of a minister's commitment to and covenant with those who have called them out.

Commissioned ministers will have completed training through: Education For Shared Ministry or Academy Certified Training Systems or Training in Ministry programs or another specifically designed curriculum of the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership.

Commissioned ministers are expected to: be an active member of a Church of the Brethren congregation; demonstrate evidence of discipleship and a faith-filled life; demonstrate leadership ability and maturity of judgment; affirm the expectations and commitments of ministerial leadership, including a declaration of intention to make church service a major concern of one's lifework; be familiar with and comply with the Church of the Brethren Ethics in Ministry Relations Paper including participation in ethics training at least once every five years; support the basic beliefs and practices of the Church of the Brethren; engage regularly in healthful spiritual, physical, emotional and relational personal practices; meet regularly with a mentor; participate in a cohort group for continued spiritual formation and accountability; demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning as evidenced by fulfilling the Annual Conference Guidelines for Continuing Education

Ordained Minister

A minister called to serve the larger church in trans-local capacities of congregation, district and denomination.



Ordained Ministers will have completed an approved educational program: The Master of Divinity degree from Bethany Theological Seminary or another institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools, the Training in Ministry program through the Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership or one of the Academy Certified Training Systems.

Ordained Ministers are expected to: be an active member of a Church of the Brethren congregation; demonstrate evidence of discipleship and a faith-filled life; affirm the expectations and commitments of ministerial leadership, including a declaration of intention to make church service a major concern of one's lifework; have a specific ministerial call as defined under the areas of service; be familiar with and comply with the Church of the Brethren Ethics in Ministry Relations Paper; support the basic beliefs and practices of the Church of the Brethren; engage regularly in healthful spiritual, physical, emotional and relational personal practices; meet regularly with a mentor; serve as mentor to peer colleagues and those being called into ministry; participate in and be willing to offer leadership for a cohort group for the purpose of continued spiritual formation and accountability; demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning as evidenced by fulfilling the Annual Conference Guidelines for Continuing Education.