

Pastoral Ministry

It has been my privilege to chair the PMLT the past two years, and to serve with a great group of elders. The Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team oversees the licensing and ordination process for the US National Conference and gives leadership to the professional development of the members of the United Brethren in Christ Ministerial Association.

Four Regions

We have four regions to which responsibility for licensing interviews has been delegated.

East. The East Region is served by Jim Bolich (Prince Street UB church, Shippensburg, Pa.) We were saddened by the sudden death of Chris Little (Mount Pleasant UB church, Chambersburg, Pa.), who was the other Eastern Region representative. With a new bishop and Jim willing to provide direction in the East, it was decided to wait until the new conference year to replace Chris. I do want to express special thanks to Greg Helman (Blue Rock UB, Waynesboro, Pa.) who assisted in the East Region to a great extent.

Central. The Central Region is served in the north by Terry Smith (Bethel Church, Elmore, Ohio), and in the south by Mike Brown (Franklin UB church, New Albany, Ohio).

North. The North Region is served by Randy Carpenter (Sunfield UB church, Sunfield, Mich.) and Lee Rhodes (Countryside UB church, Brickenridge, Mich.).

West. The West Region is served by Robert Bruce (Emmanuel UB church, Fort Wayne, Ind.) and Craig Burkholder (Hudson UB church, Hudson, Ind.).

Bishop Todd Fetters is a member of our team, and his administrative assistant, Cathy Reich, has served as a recording secretary for our meetings. A special thanks to Cathy for the great contribution she has made to the whole team by getting the information to and from candidates and to the team members. I cannot thank her enough for the way she has served me and the team.

Highlights of PMLT actions

- Elders Orders were granted to 21 individuals during the past two years. Seven of these ordinations will be conducted at the 2017 US National Conference.
- National Conference licenses were granted to 12 individuals.
- Specialized Ministry licenses were approved for 10 individuals.
- Provisional licenses were granted to 2 individuals.

Pastoral Ministry Handbook

One responsibility of the PMLT is the Pastoral Ministry Handbook. This year we revised one section of the handbook, chapter 12, "Requests for Exemption from Assignment." It is included on the other side.

The handbook is a reference tool to help our ministerial staff with their ministry. We encourage you to read through it. We believe this will encourage and enhance the licensing process. We are asking candidates to submit their materials for credentialing prior to being appointed by the bishop. This, we believe, will assist both the appointee and the congregation.

UB History Course

Five UB History classes were been conducted in the last two years, with 27 people taking the class.



Gary Gates
Director of Ministerial Licensing

CHAPTER 12

Requests for Exemption from Assignment

All national conference ministers and elders are assumed to be available for assignment. The Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA, recognizes that life situations may warrant a time of unavailability and establishes the following exemptions:

1. Leave of Absence

Ministers may seek to be exempted from service for personal reasons, to actively pursue more education, or because of ministry-related service in another position, such as chaplaincy, educational positions, or other positions where ministerial credentials are essential. Those who do may request a leave of absence.

This exemption will be granted for one year. Ministerial licenses are considered to be in good standing during this exemption period.

For those who request a leave of absence for personal reasons other than educational or ministry-related service in another position, this exemption may be renewed yearly for three consecutive years, after which the individual shall be considered inactive with cause.

2. Retired Status

At age 65, ministers may request retired status from the Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team. This exemption does not need to be renewed. Ministerial licenses of retired ministers are considered to be in good standing.

3. Medical Leave

This exemption is for ministers who cannot perform their duties because of a physician-certified medical condition. These ministers will be considered to be in good standing with the national conference during this exemption period, and will enjoy all rights and privileges of their license. They will report yearly to the national conference.

4. Inactive with Cause for Personal Reasons

a. This exemption is for ministers who have requested a leave of absence from any ministry for an extended period of time for personal reasons, except for those who hold positions in chaplaincy, educational positions, or other positions where ministerial credentials are essential.

b. During this period, such ministers shall not perform any of the duties of the ministry except under the direct supervision of the bishop or the individual's pastor.

c. After remaining in this status for two years, ministers shall surrender their credentials to the bishop to be held in trust until such time as they renew ministry.

d. Such individuals will report to the national conference.

5. Inactive without Cause

This exemption is used for ministers who have not reported to the national conference as required and who are not serving in a ministerial capacity in the church. These ministerial licenses are not considered to be in good standing during this exemption period. The Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team shall attempt to contact such individuals to determine their desire for ministry, and the national conference or Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team shall have the authority to determine the future of their license.

During this period, ministers shall not perform any of the duties of the ministry. These ministers shall surrender their credentials to the bishop to be held in trust until such time as they renew ministry or the national conference or Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team determines the appropriate course of action regarding their license.

6. Probation

a. This exemption is used for ministers who are living inconsistently with the expectations and obligations of ministers as described in the Discipline or who are under investigation for such.

b. Ministerial licenses are suspended during this probation period and can only be renewed to good standing after a full restoration process is completed.