

American Baptist Churches of Oregon

Manual for Ordination

Pastoral Services Committee

Adopted 2009

American Baptist Churches of Oregon
0245 SW Bancroft Street, Suite G • Portland, OR 97239
phone: (503) 223-6747 • email: www.vibrant-life.net

**Pastoral Services Committee
Welcome Letter**

Dear Friends,

Welcome to the ordination process of the American Baptist Churches of Oregon and the American Baptist Churches USA. This manual is your guide to our ordination process. We oversee the standards for the following categories of ordination:

- Standard Ordination
- Equivalency Ordination
- Recognition of Non-ABCUSA Ordination

Thoroughly reviewing this document is your first step in seeking ordination. Each appendix has important information for you to consider, including *The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches* and the *Ecclesiastical Process for Review of Ministerial Standing*. The information is useful for the local church and local church leaders, as well as clergy and those seeking ordination.

The Pastoral Services Committee (PSC) wants to encourage and support you through your journey. The Region staff will also be an important resource for you personally as well as providing logistical help that includes certificates for *Ordination*, *License to Preach*, and outlines for ordination services.

Please notify the Region office of any change in professional status.

These documents are not only available in this manual, but are also available in printer-friendly format on the ABCO website. (Hopefully)

Blessings in the discernment of your call,

Pastoral Services Committee

Table of Contents

Pastoral Services Committee Welcome Letter.....	2
Pathways to Ordination.....	4
Process for Recognized Professional Ordination	
Standard Ordination.....	5
Equivalency Ordination.....	7
Recognition of Non-ABCUSA Ordination	9
Appendices.....	11
Appendix 1— Process for Candidate Seeking Standard Ordination, Equivalency Ordination, Recognition of Non-ABCUSA Ordination.....	12
Appendix 2— Application, Self-Disclosure, and Release Form for All Ordination Candidates.....	13
Appendix 3— Process Checklist for Pastoral Services Committee and ABCO Office.....	17
Appendix 4— The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches.....	19
Appendix 5— Request for Reference Form.....	21
Appendix 6— Guidelines for Ordination Paper.....	23
Appendix 7- Mentors.....	25
Appendix 8— An Ecclesiastical Process for Review of Ministerial Standing.....	26

Pathways to Ordination

Historically, Baptists have followed the practice of setting apart certain individuals for special roles as leaders of local churches. This act is called ordination. Circumstances of individuals and of churches are quite different, and because of this, there are varying pathways leading to ordination within the American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA). The usual path is to attend an accredited seminary, graduate with a Master of Divinity (M.Div.) degree, be called to minister to a local church or other ministry, and be ordained by a local church following the approval process described in this Manual.

Standard Ordination

During the time of preparation, the person is usually licensed to preach as a candidate for ordination. This route is called “Standard Ordination” and the status as an ordained American Baptist minister is recognized nationally throughout the denomination.

Equivalency Ordination

In exceptional cases, relevant ministry experience may be substituted for a portion of the educational requirements. This process is called “Equivalency Ordination.”

Recognition of Ordination from Another Denomination

Ministers who have been ordained in other denominations and who wish to serve in an American Baptist church or ministry may seek to have their ordination from another denomination recognized. In order for the ordination to be recognized as standard, the educational requirements must be met. Those seeking recognition who do not meet the standard educational requirements may be regionally recognized.

Local Ordination

Finally, because ordination is a function of the autonomous local church, a church may recognize the gifts for ministry and the call of an individual within that church and ordain that person without participation by the ABCO. Because the qualifications and call of the ordained minister have not been validated by the larger American Baptist family, such local ordination is not generally transferable to other churches.

The process leading to each of these ordinations (except local ordination) is described in detail in the sections that follow.

Process for Recognized Professional Ordination

Standard Ordination

Standard Ordination is carried out by a local church upon recommendation from the Region's Pastoral Services Committee. The educational standard is an earned Master of Divinity degree (it's equivalent or higher) from a theological seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools. To view a list of ATS accredited schools, visit: http://www.ats.edu/member_schools/alpha.asp.

To become an ordained minister recognized by the American Baptist Churches of Oregon and listed in the directory, a candidate must:

- **Church Membership.**

Be a member in good standing of an American Baptist church or fellowship group related to the American Baptist Churches USA.

- **Education.**

Be a graduate of a seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools, and have earned a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent. In addition, an accredited course on American Baptist History and Polity must have been completed during seminary education, or the candidate must have completed a study approved by the Pastoral Services Committee.

- **Assessment at the Center for Ministry**

- **License** (*optional*).

Be licensed by the local church. (For more information, refer to the national guidelines for licensing available at http://www.abc-usa.org/Resources/Ordination_Stds.pdf.)

- **Call.**

Have a specific call. A ministry as listed under "Types of Service" below has offered a position to the candidate, or the candidate is already serving that position.

- **Types of Service**

- o Local church ministry, including all staff who exercise ministerial functions: preaching, teaching, administering the ordinances, pastoral care, and counseling.
- o Mission service on the national or international field in which ministerial functions (as previously described) will be exercised.
- o Chaplaincies: institutional, military or academic where ministerial functions (as previously described) will be exercised. See <http://www.abc-cpcs.org>
- o Pastoral counselor. See <http://www.abc-cpcs.org>
- o Staff or authorized volunteer service, involving ministerial functions (as previously described) of an American Baptist agency or institution, a council of churches, or some other ecumenical ministry appropriately recognized by the American Baptist Churches USA.

- **Initiation of Ordination Process**

An individual or local church may initiate the process of ordination. See Appendix 1: Process for Candidate Seeking Standard Ordination, Equivalency Ordination, Recognition of Non-ABCUSA Ordination, or Regional Ordination.”

- **Proceeding Through Ordination**

Ordination Council

After receiving approval from the Pastoral Services Committee, the candidate shall ask the local church to call an ordination council comprised of representatives from churches of the American Baptist Churches of Oregon region. The purpose of this council is to examine and affirm the candidate’s preparedness for ordination, through our associational life. Pastoral Services Committee shall have freedom to alter this requirement depending upon the context and setting.

Ordination Service

Following approval of the regional ordination council, the candidate shall ask the local church to call an ordination service. American Baptist Churches of Oregon shall be invited to attend, but the ordination is carried out by the local church. The candidate shall reaffirm and sign the current edition of “The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches” (Appendix 4) at the ordination service. This serves as a public teaching tool to make the witnesses aware that the candidate has agreed to abide by definite standards of conduct.

Afterward the church shall notify the Region’s Pastoral Services Committee in writing that the candidate has been ordained. ABCO will then recognize the ordination and list the newly ordained person on the American Baptist Churches Information Systems (ABCIS).

Upon request, a minister in good standing, upon moving to another Region, will be given a letter by the Executive Minister verifying his or her status.

Equivalency Ordination

The educational prerequisite for the full recognition of candidates for ordination within the American Baptist Churches of Oregon is reaffirmed to be graduation with receipt of a Master of Divinity degree or *its equivalent* from a theological seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools. “Its equivalent” may mean an experiential equivalent verified by the Pastoral Services Committee. It may also mean another educational sequence (e.g. Doctor of Philosophy in Religion).

For more information, refer to Track 2 of “Recommended Procedures for Ordination, Commissioning, and Recognition for the Christian Ministry in the American Baptist Churches.” View this document at http://www.abc-usa.org/Resources/Ordination_Std.pdf.

To become an ordained minister recognized by the American Baptist Churches of Oregon and listed in the directory, a candidate must:

- **Church Membership.**

Be a member in good standing of an American Baptist church or fellowship group related to the American Baptist Churches USA.

- **Education.**

The maximum experiential equivalency to be granted is six (6) years, which may be understood to be the equivalent to three (3) years of higher education. In addition, an accredited course on American Baptist History and Polity must have been completed or the candidate must have completed a study approved by the Pastoral Services Committee.

- **Assessment at the Center for Ministry**

- **License** (*optional*).

Be licensed by the local church. (For more information, refer to the national guidelines for licensing, available at http://www.abc-usa.org/Resources/Ordination_Std.pdf.)

- **Call.**

Have a specific call. A ministry as listed under “Types of Service” below has offered a position to the candidate, or the candidate is already serving that position.

- **Types of Service**

- Local church ministry, including all staff who exercise ministerial functions: preaching, teaching, administering the ordinances, pastoral care, and counseling.
- Mission service on the national or international field in which ministerial functions (as previously described) will be exercised.
- Chaplaincies: institutional, military or academic where ministerial functions (as previously described) will be exercised. See <http://www.abc-cpcs.org>

- Pastoral counselor. See <http://www.abc-cpcs.org>
- Staff or authorized volunteer service, involving ministerial functions (as previously described) of an American Baptist agency or institution, a council of churches, or some other ecumenical ministry appropriately recognized by the American Baptist Churches USA.

• **Initiation of Ordination Process**

An individual or local church may initiate the process of ordination. See Appendix 1: “Process for Candidate Seeking Standard Ordination, Equivalency Ordination, Recognition of Non-ABCUSA Ordination, or Regional Ordination.”

• **Proceeding Through Ordination**

Ordination Council

After receiving approval from the Pastoral Services Committee, the candidate shall ask the local church to call an ordination council comprised of representatives from churches of the American Baptist Churches of Oregon region. The purpose of this council is to examine and affirm the candidate’s preparedness for ordination, through our associational life. Pastoral Services Committee shall have freedom to alter this requirement depending upon the context and setting.

Ordination Service

Following approval of the regional ordination council, the candidate shall ask the local church to call an ordination service. American Baptist Churches of Oregon shall be invited to attend, but the ordination is carried out by the local church. The candidate shall reaffirm and sign the current edition of “The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches” (Appendix 4) at the ordination service. This serves as a public teaching tool to make the witnesses aware that the candidate has agreed to abide by definite standards of conduct.

Afterward the church shall notify the Region’s Pastoral Services Committee in writing that the candidate has been ordained. ABCO will then recognize the ordination and list the newly ordained person on the American Baptist Churches Information Systems (ABCIS).

Upon request, a minister in good standing, upon moving to another Region, will be given a letter by the Executive Minister verifying his or her status.

Recognition of Non-ABCUSA Ordination

American Baptist Churches may recognize the ordination of a person by another Christian denomination provided that the ordination is based upon standards essentially equivalent to those of ABC standard ordination.

To become an ordained minister recognized by the American Baptist Churches of Oregon and listed in the directory, a candidate must:

- **Church Membership.**

Be a member in good standing of an American Baptist church or fellowship group related to the American Baptist Churches USA.

- **Education.**

Be a graduate of a seminary accredited by the Association of Theological Schools, and have earned a Master of Divinity degree or its equivalent. In addition, an accredited course on American Baptist History and Polity must have been completed during seminary education, or the candidate must have completed a study approved by the Pastoral Services Committee.

- **Assessment at the Center for Ministry**

- **License** (*optional*).

Be licensed by the local church. (For more information, refer to the national guidelines on licensing, available at http://www.abc-usa.org/Resources/Ordination_Std.pdf.)

- **Call.**

Have a specific call. A ministry as listed under “Types of Service” below has offered a position to the candidate, or the candidate is already serving that position.

- **Types of Service**

- Local church ministry, including all staff who exercise ministerial functions: preaching, teaching, administering the ordinances, pastoral care, and counseling.
- Mission service on the national or international field in which ministerial functions (as previously described) will be exercised.
- Chaplaincies: institutional, military or academic where ministerial functions (as previously described) will be exercised. See <http://www.abc-cpcs.org>.
- Pastoral counselor. See <http://www.abc-cpcs.org>
- Staff or authorized volunteer service, involving ministerial functions (as previously described) of an American Baptist agency or institution, a council of churches, or some other ecumenical ministry appropriately recognized by the American Baptist Churches USA.

- **Initiation of Ordination Process**

An individual or local church may initiate the process of ordination. See Appendix 1: “Process for Candidate Seeking Standard Ordination, Equivalency Ordination, Recognition of Non-ABCUSA Ordination, or Regional Ordination.”

- **Completing the Recognition Process**

The PSC will communicate in writing to the church or agency where the candidate is employed its recommendation of recognition. The local church is encouraged to schedule and carry out a service of recognition during which the candidate shall reaffirm and sign the current edition of “The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches” (Appendix 4). This serves as a public teaching tool to make the witnesses aware that the candidate has agreed to abide by definite standards of conduct.

The PSC shall notify the Region office of its recommendation to recognize the Non-ABCUSA Ordination. ABCO will then recognize the ordination and list the newly recognized person on the American Baptist Churches Information Systems (ABCIS).

Upon request, a minister in good standing, upon moving to another Region, will be given a letter by the Executive Minister verifying his or her status.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Process for Candidate Seeking Standard Ordination, Equivalency Ordination, Recognition of Non-ABCUSA Ordination, or Regional Ordination

Prerequisite: Be an active member of your local ABCUSA congregation.

Prior to first meeting with Pastoral Services Committee

1. Contact your Cluster's Ministry and Mission Coach and tell him/her of your interest in the ordination process.
2. Meet with the Executive Minister.
3. Meet with Coach and a representative of Pastoral Services Committee (PSC).
4. Submit a letter to the Region office from your church recommending you for ordination.
5. Complete Application Form (Appendix 2) and submit the form (online or by mail) along with \$100 to cover the cost of the background check to the ABCO office.
6. For candidates seeking recognition from other denominations: submit a copy of ordination certificate.
7. Write and submit a brief (approximately five pages) autobiographical sketch including personal faith history including your current understanding of your ministry call.
8. Submit four (4) references to the ABCO office. At least two of these should be professional or educational references. All must be current references (see Appendix 5).
9. Submit official transcripts from all post-secondary schools.
10. Schedule your first meeting with PSC after completing the above steps.

Attend first meeting with Pastoral Services Committee.

During the first meeting with the PSC:

1. Sign "The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches" (Appendix 4).
2. Receive name and contact information of mentor (see Appendix 8).
3. Discuss documents previously submitted.

Next steps for all *chaplaincy* candidates:

1. Provide documents as requested to the Chaplains' Committee.
2. Schedule interview with the Chaplains' Committee.

Prior to second meeting with PSC:

1. Write ordination/position paper (see Appendix 6).
2. Complete other work as recommended by the PSC following previous meeting.
3. Schedule your second meeting with PSC after completing steps 1 and 2.

Attend second meeting with PSC.

During the second meeting with the PSC:

1. Present ordination/position paper.
2. Address any miscellaneous concerns.

Note: All documents must be submitted 2 weeks prior to meeting.

Appendix 2

American Baptist Churches of Oregon (ABCO)
0245 SW Bancroft, Suite G, Portland, OR
Application, Self-Disclosure, and Release Form
for All Candidates Seeking Ordination

Date: _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

E-mail Address _____ Phone _____

Check for \$100, payable to ABCO is enclosed. When it is received, the Region office will contact you to initiate your background check.

Ordination you are seeking:

- _____ Standard Ordination
- _____ Equivalency Ordination
- _____ Non-ABC Ordination Recognition

Are you seeking chaplaincy credentials? _____

1. List college or under-graduate degrees. Give date for each.

2. List seminary or other theological education. Give dates.

3. Have you completed an American Baptist History and Polity Course at a Seminary?
_____ Yes _____ No (*If "yes," give name of school.*)

4. Have you served as a pastor, interim pastor, associate or assistant pastor in the American Baptist Churches, USA? _____ Yes _____ No (*If "yes" state which and describe when and where*)

5. Have you served as a pastor, interim pastor, associate or assistant pastor in another denomination? _____ Yes _____ No *(If “yes” state which and give dates).*

6. Please provide a brief statement which describes why you are pursuing the category of ordination indicated at the beginning of this form.

7. Give reasons why you feel you would like to minister in the American Baptist Churches USA.

American Baptist Churches of Oregon (ABCO)
Self-Disclosure Form

Name: _____

Each person having received or anticipating a call to a position with ABCO is required to sign this “Self-Disclosure and Release Form” as a part of the process. Others already within the Region may be asked to sign this form when moving to a new location. The completed form should be given to the Region Office. ABCO has an outstanding record for maintaining the highest moral and ethical standards in the practice of ministry. This record of service reflects our commitment to “preserve the dignity, maintain the discipline, and promote the integrity of the vocation to which we have been called” (The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches). When any professional church leader engages in misconduct, the name of Christ is dishonored, the Church is brought into disrepute, and all involved suffer. In addition, there can be legal repercussions from such acts of misconduct. Therefore, ABCO is committed to taking any reasonable precaution to avoid such disrepute, suffering, and litigation. This Self-Disclosure and Release Form is a part of the Region’s ministry. Your understanding and cooperation are deeply appreciated.

Mark "T" for True; "NT" for Not True

	T	NT
1. I have never been the subject of official disciplinary proceedings in the ABCUSA or any other denomination or independent group that resulted in any of the following:		
a. Censure	_____	_____
b. Suspension of recognition of ordination	_____	_____
c. Withdrawal of recognition of ordination.	_____	_____
2. No official disciplinary proceedings within the ABCUSA or any other denomination or independent group are pending against me at this present time.	_____	_____
3. No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual harassment, exploitation, or abuse; or financial misconduct has ever been successfully prosecuted against me, settled out of court, or dropped because the statute of limitations had expired.	_____	_____
4. My driver's license has never been suspended or revoked due to reckless driving, driving while intoxicated, or driving under the influence of a controlled substance.	_____	_____
5. I have never been found guilty or pleaded guilty or no contest to felony or misdemeanor charges or had felony or misdemeanor charges dropped because the statute of limitations had expired.	_____	_____
6. My employment has never been terminated for actual or attempted sexual harassment, exploitation, or abuse; discrimination; physical abuse; child abuse; spousal abuse; or financial misconduct by me; nor have I terminated my employment primarily to avoid facing such charges or to avoid being terminated because of such charges.	_____	_____
7. I know of no facts or circumstances regarding my background that would warrant further review of my fitness for ministry before my being entrusted with the responsibilities of ministry on behalf of a calling body within this Region.	_____	_____
8. I have completed specific training in clergy ethics (including a review of procedures for handling allegations of pastoral misconduct).	_____	_____
9. If I have not completed specific training in clergy ethics, or it is determined the training I did receive was not sufficient, I commit myself to complete such training within one year of accepting a position within this Region.	_____	_____

On a separate sheet provide an explanation for each item that caused you to answer “not true.” Give enough information for follow-up, including the date, nature, and place of each incident leading to a complaint, proceeding, or action; where and when each was adjudicated; and the disposition of the complaint(s). Indicate steps taken toward rehabilitation, if any. Use additional pages as needed.

10. In addition to the names used on this form, as an adult, I have been known by the following name(s) during the time(s) indicated:

American Baptist Churches of Oregon (ABCO)

Release Form

This information I have provided on this application is accurate to the best of my knowledge and may be verified by the Region. I hereby authorize ABCO to make any and all contacts necessary to verify my prior employment history, and to inquire concerning any prior arrest or criminal records or any professional, religious, or judicial proceedings involving me as a defendant. By means of this release, I also authorize any previous employer(s), religious judicatory, and any law enforcement agencies or judicial authorities to release any and all requested information to the Pastoral Services Committee of the American Baptist Church of Oregon.

I have read this release and understand fully that the information obtained may be used to deny me acceptance by a calling body within the ABCO or the recognition of my ordination by the Region. I also agree that I will hold harmless ABCO, as well as any prior employer, religious judicatory, law enforcement authority, or judicial authority from any and all claims, liabilities, and cause of action for the release of the use or any information.

Signature of Candidate: _____

Date _____

Appendix 3

Name: _____

Member church: _____

Ordination Process Checklist for PSC/ABCO Office

Text in italics designates work to be completed by Administrative Assistant in ABCO office.

Prior to first meeting with PSC:

- Applicant made initial contact with Ministry and Mission Coach. *Coach gives all contact information to designated staff person in Region office who maintains PSC documents, who informs the Executive Minister.*
- Applicant met with Executive Minister.
- Scheduled meeting with coach and representative of PSC (date) _____
- Met with coach and representative of PSC Chair (date) _____.
- Completed application form and submitted \$100.
File form and inform Coach and PSC Chair. Forward money to ABCO financial manager and place a copy of the check in the applicant's file. Designated staff person will initiate the background check.
- Receive report and file in applicant's file. Notify the PSC Chair immediately upon receipt of report.*
- Email completed application form and letter from church to coach and chair no later than two (2) weeks prior to meeting.*
- Submitted letter from church recommending ordination. *Place in candidate's file.*
- (If candidate is seeking recognition from another denomination) Submit a copy of ordination certificate. *Place in applicant's file.*
- Submitted autobiographical sketch/personal faith history. *Place in applicant's file.*
- Email autobiographical sketch/personal faith history to PSC plus Coaches and Executive Minister no later than two (2) weeks prior to first meeting.*
- Supplied references. *Place in applicant's file. Copies of references are made for PSC members and supplied for the face-to-face meeting.*

Reference #1

Reference #2

Reference #3

Reference #4

- Supplied official transcript. *Place in applicant's file. A copy is made for the MLC Chair and supplied for the face-to-face meeting.*
- Scheduled first meeting with PSC Chair (date) _____
- Attend Center for Ministry for Assessment (date) _____
- Report from Center for Ministry (date received) _____

Next step for all *chaplaincy* candidates

- Documents submitted to Chaplains' Committee. (The PSC will form a Chaplains' Committee as needed to evaluate the candidate's preparation and suitability for chaplaincy and to advise the candidate about the process for obtaining chaplaincy credentials.)
- Recommendation received from Chaplains' Committee.

First meeting with PSC

- Signed "The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches." *Place in candidate's file.*
- Received name and contact information of mentor. (The PSC will assign a mentor for all candidates to encourage, support, and guide them through the process.) *Record information in candidate's file.*

Prior to second meeting with PSC

- Submitted ordination/position paper. *Place in candidate's file.*
- Email ordination/position paper to entire PSC plus Coaches and Executive Minister no later than two (2) weeks prior to second meeting.*
- Completed other recommended work. *Place in candidate's file.*

During the second meeting with PSC

- Discussed ordination/position page.
- PSC makes recommendation to proceed with ordination.
- Appoint a moderator for the council from the Pastoral Services committee.

Following second meeting with PSC

- Send letter to church recommending candidate proceed with ordination/recognition
- Arrange a council date with sponsoring church.

Ordination Council

- Invite churches of ABCO to send representatives. RSVP kindly requested. Make a copy of the paper available upon request.
- Have copies of the paper available at council.
- Clerk is appointed from sponsoring church.
- Following the review of the paper and examination of the candidate, candidate is excused and representatives from ABCO churches will vote on ordination.

Ordination Ceremony

- Date is arranged at the convenience of the sponsoring church.
- Moderator or representative from council will read recommendation.
- Region will provide an ordination certificate.
- Copy of certificate will be place in candidates file. *Record name in the American Baptist Churches Information System (ABCIS).*
- Contact Region's communication coordinator for publicity purposes.

Appendix 4

The Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches

Having accepted God's call to leadership in Christ's Church, I covenant with God to serve Christ and the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit, to deepen my obedience to the Two Great Commandments: to love the Lord our God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love my neighbor as myself.

In affirmation of this commitment, I will abide by the Code of Ethics of the Ministers Council of the American Baptist Churches and I will faithfully support its purposes and ideals. As further affirmation of my commitment, I covenant with my colleagues in ministry that we will hold one another accountable for fulfillment of all the public actions set forth in our Code of Ethics.

- I will hold in trust the traditions and practices of our American Baptist Churches; I will not accept a position in the American Baptist family unless I am in accord with those traditions and practices; nor will I use my influence to alienate my congregation/constituents or any part thereof from its relationship and support of the denomination. If my convictions change, I will resign my position.
- I will respect and recognize the variety of calls to ministry among my American Baptist colleagues, and other Christians.
- I will seek to support all colleagues in ministry by building constructive relationships wherever I serve, both with the staff where I work and with colleagues in neighboring churches.
- I will advocate adequate compensation for my profession. I will help lay persons and colleagues to understand that ministerial leaders should not expect or require fees for pastoral services from constituents they serve, when those constituents are helping pay their salaries.
- I will not seek personal favors or discounts on the basis of my professional ministerial status.
- I will maintain a disciplined ministry in such ways as keeping hours of prayer and devotion, endeavoring to maintain wholesome family relationships, sexual integrity, and financial responsibility, regularly engaging in educational and recreational activities for ministerial and personal development. I will seek to maintain good health habits.
- I will recognize my primary obligation to the church or employing group to which I have been called, and will accept added responsibilities only if they do not interfere with the overall effectiveness of my ministry.

- I will personally and publicly support my colleagues who experience discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, age, marital status, national origin, physical impairment or disability.
- I will not proselytize from other Christian churches.
- I will, upon my resignation or retirement, sever my ministerial leadership relations with my former constituents, and will not make ministerial contacts in the field of another ministerial leader without his/her request and or consent.
- I will hold in confidence and treat as confidential communication any information provided to me with the expectation of privacy. I will not disclose such information in private or public except when, in my practice of ministry, I am convinced that the sanctity of confidentiality is outweighed by my well-founded belief that life-threatening or substantial harm will be caused.
- I will not use my ministerial status, position or authority knowingly to abuse, misguide, negatively influence, manipulate, or take advantage of anyone, especially children.
- I will report all instances of abuse as required by law to the appropriate agency. In any case involving persons working in ABC ministry, I will also report the circumstances to the appropriate Regional and/or national denominational representative.
- I will show my personal love for God as revealed in Jesus Christ in my life and ministry, as I strive together with my colleagues to preserve the dignity, maintain the discipline and promote the integrity of the vocation to which we have been called.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

For printable version go to <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/CodeofEthics/EngEthics.aspx>.

For a learning guide on the Covenant and Code of Ethics go to

- <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/WhoWeAre/documents/LearningGuideontheethics06edited.pdf>

Appendix 5

**Pastoral Services Committee of
American Baptist Churches of Oregon (ABCO)**

Request for Reference Form

Applicant _____ Date _____

Name of Reference _____ Telephone # _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Please respond to the following areas of concern, and return to the address at the end of this form within two weeks of the above date. Thank you.

1. How long have you known the applicant, and in what roles or relationships? _____

2. Describe the applicant's strengths. _____

3. Describe perceived weaknesses. _____

4. Describe the applicant's history of establishing and maintaining effective, healthy relationships? _____

5. From your observation, describe ways the applicant responds to conflict. Give examples if possible.

6. Explain why you would or would not select this person to be the pastor of your home church, if the choice were yours. _____

7. Describe any concerns about ethical misconduct related to this person (financial, sexual, personal, ministerial, etc.).

8. Is there any other information of which the Ministerial Leadership Committee should be made aware?

Return to:
Pastoral Services Committee
American Baptist Churches of Oregon
0245 SW Bancroft Street, Suite G
Portland, OR 97239

Appendix 6

American Baptist Churches of Oregon (ABCO)
0245 SW Bancroft Street, Suite G, Portland, OR 97239

Guidelines for Ordination Paper

Purpose of the Paper

The ordination paper is a major reflection on theological and ecclesiastical ideas and how they relate to your life and ministry. This paper is not intended to be an exclusively academic paper, though it definitely requires theological reflection. This paper is a tool that will enable the Ministerial Leadership Committee understand your theological process. It is also intended as a tool to help you integrate theology and doctrine in your life and ministry, including how these inform and shape your own spiritual formation and practices. It is not, however, a restatement of your personal faith history.

Introduction

A brief description of the ways you relate to the identity and diversity of American Baptist Churches USA.

Christian Doctrine and Practice as They Relate to Your Life and Ministry

- The Person of God the Father
- The Person of God the Son - Jesus Christ
- The Person of God the Holy Spirit
- The Trinity
- Humanity and Sin
- Salvation—The Nature of the Gospel
- View of Scripture
- Kingdom of God
- The Christian Hope—The Meanings of Death and Eternal Life
- Christian Eschatology

The Doctrine of the Church as It Relates to Your Life and Ministry

- Mission of the Church
- Ordinances: Baptism and the Lord's Supper
- Ecumenical Aspects of the Church
- Place of the Church in History
- Purpose and Place of the Church in Today's World
- The Role of the Minister
- The Ministry of the Laity
- Theology and Practice of Worship

Relationships with the Wider Body of Christ

Describe how you understand your relationship as a minister and the role of the local church in relationship to

ABC of Oregon
American Baptist Churches, USA
Ecumenical Witness to Community and World

Please reflect on your understanding of the nature of the autonomy of the local church, loyalty to the denomination, and integrity in these relationships.

Conclusion

Theology of Family of Origin, Current Family and/or Significant Relationships

In conclusion, write a section on how the above reflections inform and shape a holistic theology of your greater family. We recognize that “traditional nuclear family” is often not the current norm. Please reflect on your theology out of your own context.

Appendix 7

Mentors

- A mentor should be a colleague in ministry who is acquainted with and supportive to ABCUSA
- The mentor should meet based on proximity regularly. (At least monthly)
- The mentor/candidate should agree on the time/place criteria.
- Mentor needs to be available for phone/email contact at anytime
- Mentor's should provide honest feedback to the candidate and the PSC.
- The mentor should be provided with an outline of the process that the candidate is involved in.
- The mentor should offer to be a part of the ordination service.
- The mentor should reaffirm and support the ABCO Code of Ethics.
- Mentor should pray for and with the candidate.