

INFORMATION FOR CREDENTIAL APPLICANTS 2015
For Ministerial Recognition in the
Fellowship of the Assemblies of God

Montana Ministry Network of the Assemblies of God
2147 Overland Avenue Suite 100
Billings MT 59102
406-652-2417

Deadlines

Request for applications must be made by **September 1** of the calendar year, and the subsequent deadline for submission of these applications to be postmarked no later than **October 15** of the credentialing year.

This manual has been prepared to give helpful information to those who may seek ministerial recognition in the Assemblies of God Fellowship.

Ministerial credentials are for the purpose of recognizing God-called leadership and ministry within the Assemblies of God. They are not granted to identify lay ministries within the local church such as teachers, children's workers and those who preach occasionally. It is expected that these ministries are common to many and are known within the local body. Credentials are granted to those who show a genuine call of God for leadership and ministry as a life-calling.

There is a regular procedure for all candidates for ministerial recognition to follow. They should acquaint themselves with the teachings, practices, and purposes of the Fellowship as revealed through the constitution and Bylaws of both the General Council and the Montana Ministry Network . A copy of the Constitution of the General Council may be obtained from the General Secretary, 1445 Boonville Avenue, Springfield MO 65802. You can also obtain a copy from their web site: ag.org. A copy of the Network Constitution and Bylaws may be obtained from the District Office, 2147 Overland Ave. Ste. 100, Billings MT 59102. Or online at mtaog.org.

All applications for ministerial recognition are to be made through the Network, and not to the General Council according to the rules found in the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Council.

PREREQUISITES

No authority is given to any Credentials Committee to grant recognition to candidates whose marriage does not conform to guidelines provided by the General Council Constitution and Bylaws. Neither is any authority given to license or ordain anyone to the ministry who has not received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit in Pentecostal fullness, according to Acts 2:4. Both the experience and doctrinal belief of the candidates must conform to the standards for the ministry as set forth in the Word of God.

PROPER MOTIVES

As a candidate you should be sure your motives are pure when applying for the recognition of the Assemblies of God. No one should apply to the committee whose chief thought is that you may have a paper to show that you are a minister, and that by your paper you will be received by the churches in the Fellowship. Even if the Credentials Committee were to grant papers under such circumstances, the recipient of same would soon find that your papers would be of little value to assist in the opening of doors for your ministry. A ministry, anointed by the Holy Spirit, will prove to be the best credential that one can have.

The Assemblies of God Fellowship is founded on the principles of voluntary unity and cooperation. Ministers of other faiths are not solicited by its members. Every applicant ought to feel that the fellowship of the Assemblies of God is your fold, that you belong there, that you are one with these people, that you are of the same precious faith, that their principles, purposes and practices are yours and therefore, you are in full accord with them. You should come to this conclusion without any pressure from any of its members. If this be your motive and you are acceptable to the Credentials Committee, you will not only receive benefit yourself, but you will be an asset to the Fellowship as well. There will be no question but that you can be depended upon to cooperate with your fellow-ministers and to labor with them in full accord and harmony for the development of the field as a whole.

MINISTERS FROM OTHER FELLOWSHIPS

An applicant who may appear before our Credentials Committee having been ordained or licensed by some other reputable church body, will be expected to satisfy the Committee that his past record is above reproach. Such applicants will be acceptable on their own merits and the recommendations of the church body with whom formerly associated. An exchange of papers will be granted to those who meet the criteria of the General Council. Applicants for ministerial recognition who may have secured a sort of ordination through mail-order ministerial bureaus, or through the instrumentality of questionable church fellowship, will find that their ordination will not be accepted by our Credentials Committee. They must, therefore, come through the regular channels prescribed by our Fellowship, and will receive recognition according to their character, experience, training, and qualifications for the ministry.

TYPES OF CREDENTIALS

Ministry Described

- A. Christ's gifts to the Church include apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors, and teachers (Ephesians 4:11), exhorters, administrators, leaders and helpers (Romans 12:7, 8).
- B. In terms of preparation and maturity of ministry, four classifications of ministry are recognized, viz., the ordained minister, the licensed minister, the certified minister, and a ministry acknowledgment.

A man or woman applying for ministerial recognition must give testimony to having experienced the new birth (John 3:5) and to having received the baptism of the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4. The Spirit-filled life will enable him to fulfill the threefold mission of the Church (see Article V, paragraph 10 of the Statement of Fundamental Truths of the General Council Constitution.) (Resolutions 3/04 and 5/09)

C. New Policy (April 2015): All credential applicants must present proof in the application process that they have met educational requirements before being interviewed by the credential committee.

The Assemblies of God fellowship gives recognition in the following levels of ministry:

Certified Ministers (Resolution 4/11)

At the discretion of the credentials committee, an applicant may be required to complete a course of study.

Recognition shall be granted in one of two categories:

- a. Persons who indicate that God has called them and who manifest a desire to enter the ministry by engaging in Christian service, but whose present development may not warrant their being licensed to preach.
- b. Persons who are efficient helpers in Gospel work and devote a part of their time to Christian service.

C. Licensed Ministers (Resolution 4/11)

1. Preaching ministry

At the discretion of the credentials committee, an applicant may be required to complete a course of study.

The applicant shall have a life above reproach and becoming to a minister of the Gospel (1 Timothy 4:12).

The applicant must give clear evidence of a call to the ministry, practical experience in preaching and Christian work, together with an evident purpose to devote his or her life to this work.

D. **Ordained Ministers** (Resolution 4/15)

Qualifications for recognition as an ordained minister must be in accord with the New Testament scriptures which provide the necessary guidance in the matter of such recognition (1 Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9)

All ordinations shall take place under the auspices of this District Council, except at the discretion of the district presbytery.

All applicants shall have held a license to preach for at least two years, have shown 2 years of **proven ministry**, have a **durable commitment** to engage in ministry, shall be twenty-three years of age and must pass a **credit** and **background** check.

Education (Must complete one of the following).

1. **Endorsed A/G College – 4 years (96 hours of study)**
2. **Berean School of the Bible – 8 courses Ordination; 10 courses License; 9 courses Certified**
3. **Northwest University Fast-Track – 4 college courses for each credential level**
4. **Life Experience:**
 - a. **Must be at least 30 years of age.**
 - b. **Must complete A/G History, Missions, and Governance.**
 - c. **Must have a proven and fruitful ministry.**
 - d. **Approved on a case-by-case basis.**

Due to the ambiguity of the statement “two years of proven ministry” and the desire that the objectives of the interview match the purpose of ordination – to review and affirm ministry – rather than to investigate doctrine, or entry level matters, the following questions must be addressed in a satisfactory manner.

Focus Questions:

1. **Describe your ministry history for the last two years.**
2. **Describe how God has used you in proclamation of the Word.**
3. **Describe how God has used you in leadership.**
4. **Describe how God has used you in personal ministry to others.**
5. **Describe how God has used you in the spiritual gifts.**
6. **Describe your commitment to engage in long-term ministry as it relates to the personal and family choices that you’ve made.**
7. **Describe your commitment to engage in long-term ministry as it relates to your efforts toward ongoing education and/or ministry training.**
8. **Describe your long-term, future ministry plans.**

It is the committee’s belief that these focus questions will help the sectional committees and presbytery defines a proven ministry before granting ordination.

Licensed ministers seeking ordination who transfer from another district shall have resided in this district for at least one year, met the requirements of this district, and received the endorsement of the officary of the district from which they transferred

An ordained minister shall be one of mature experience and qualification who is able to undertake the responsibilities of the ministry.

In order to maintain active status, ordained ministers shall be engaged in viable ministry and proclamation of the gospel except for cases of disability, retirement, or other valid circumstances as determined by the general secretary (See General Bylaws Art. VII Sect. 3 e. (6).

POLICY OF CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE

The Network Presbytery is the District Credentials Committee. Deeply conscious of the responsibilities resting upon them, the Credentials Committee will prayerfully consider all applications for credentials. There are many laymen in our churches who have ability to preach, but who would find themselves clearly out of harmony with the will of God should they seek to enter the ministry as their life work. There are others who have ability to preach and to care for smaller assemblies. Their qualifications have been recognized and a License to Preach granted, but their ministry is largely local. Men and women of such qualifications have held a License to Preach in some of our districts for many years without being ordained. Ordination should be granted to those whose ministry is of such a marked nature that it will receive more than local acceptance.

The Credentials Committee is not bound to issue a License to Preach to those hold Certificate of Ministry, until the candidate's fitness shall justify the action. Neither will it of necessity grant ordination to those who have held a License to Preach for two full consecutive years. Ordination is granted only on the grounds of the candidate's having met the requirements of our General and Network Councils and the assurance that the qualifications and experience of the candidate fit him for a full Pentecostal ministry which will be generally acceptable in any of the churches of the Network.

IMPROVING ONE'S MINISTRY

Provision has been made for the development and continued growth of all ministers, and such provisions will be recommended to all candidates appearing before the Credentials Committee. This provision includes Bible College training, correspondence courses, and oversight of experienced pastors, evangelists or Network officers, etc.

All certified and licensed are given as much consideration by the Network officers, in their various fields of labor, as those who have received ordination. Their standing in the fellowship established by the District Constitution, and advice and help when needed, is granted freely to them. They are expected to comply with the agreements adopted by the General and Network Councils and to cooperate with the Network officers in all constitutional decisions.

FINANCIAL POLICY

The financial policy of the Montana Network calls for 100% of the ministerial income tithe to be given to the district with the exception of that amount required as dues to the General Council. As of April 2014 the ANNUAL amounts are as follows:

| | <u>Network Council</u> | <u>General Council</u> |
|-----------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | tithe or minimum... | |
| Ordained | \$180. (minimum) | \$25/month = \$300.00 year |
| Licensed | \$ 120. | \$20/month = \$240.00 year |
| Certified | \$ 120. | \$ 10.00/month = \$120.00 year |

Send network dues to the network office and general dues to the General Council. Network dues can be paid online at mtaog.org. There is no fee for retired or semi-retired pastors, they may support the district at their own discretion when not receiving a ministerial income. Be sure to clearly indicate "Minister Tithe" on checks. Ministers who may not have a ministerial income are REQUIRED to contribute a minimum of the amounts listed above to the Montana Network Council.

The financial policy for the Network and General Council may be amended from time to time. It is expected that the minister should keep current with these policies and comply willingly. Failure to adhere to a strict standard of stewardship as leaders will bring hurt to our churches and shall be grounds for dismissal from the ministerial fellowship.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR RECOGNITION

Each applicant shall:

- Give evidence of a genuine born again experience according to John 3:3;
- Be baptized in water according to Matthew 28:19;
- Have received the baptism of the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:4;
- Be a member of a local Assemblies of God church;
- Have a character above reproach;
- Give evidence of the divine call of God upon your life to the ministry;
- Be in full agreement with the Assemblies of God doctrinal position and policy; and
- Be willing to seek counsel of your peers in the ministry.

We disapprove of any married person holding ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God if either partner has a former spouse living unless the divorce occurred prior to his or her conversion or the marriage was annulled or dissolved for reasons of an illegal marriage through deception or fraud.

Applicants for ordination must be 23 years of age, have held a License to Preach and been engaged in active ministry for at least two full consecutive years, and have been a member of the Montana District for one full year.

Also note General Council Bylaws - Article VII, Sections 1,2,4,6.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION

1. This applicant should make known your desire for ministerial recognition by writing or calling the Network Office. An application will be sent to you. The application, all Bible College or Global University transcripts and reference forms must be returned to the Network Office no later than October 15th. These must be filled out completely and returned with a **recent photograph** of yourself and a **\$150.00** non-refundable filing fee and a copy of your **social security card**. You should also seek to establish contact with the presbyter in the section of your residence.
2. Applications and transcripts are checked by the Network Secretary.
3. Those who meet the General Council's credential requirements are forwarded to the Sectional Presbyter who arranges for written testing and oral interviews. A sheet will be mailed to you from the district office to help you prepare for this exam.
4. The Sectional Presbyter/Credential's Committee makes recommendations of candidates to the Network Presbytery by December 17th. The Presbytery then interviews all candidates Applying for credentials.
5. The approved applicant's information is forwarded to the General Council Credentials committee, which makes the final determinations.
6. Those approved are recognized at the Network Council session held in April.

REQUIRED STUDIES

The Montana Network has adopted the correspondence course for ministerial training as recommended by the General Presbytery of the Assemblies of God. The Berean School of the Bible or similar approved course is for those who have not graduated from a recognized Assemblies of God Bible College.

Completion of the following Global University courses or equivalent are required by the Montana Network prior to the issuance or the advancement of ministerial credentials:

1. Prior to the issuance of Certified Ministers credentials, the applicant must complete the following courses or their equivalent:
 - See attached list of Berean Courses (Ministerial Studies Options)
 - Montana Network Constitution and Bylaws (read) available online - mtaog.org
2. Prior to the issuance of License to Preach, the applicant must complete the following courses in addition to those listed above or their equivalent:
 - See attached list of Berean Courses (Ministerial Studies Options)
- 3.. Prior to ordination, the applicant must complete all of the courses listed under Certified Minister and License to Preach plus the following or their equivalent:
 - See attached list of Berean Courses (Ministerial Studies Options)

RENEWALS

All credential holders shall be reviewed annually by the Network Secretary. They are to be signed by the superintendent or secretary after evaluation of your annual minister's questionnaire. All credentials holders shall be renewed from the General Council after approval of the Network. Compliance with Network standards of ethics, morality, doctrine and financial stewardship will be expected for renewal.

TRANSFERS

When a minister moves from the Montana District to take up residence in another district you should request a transfer. You will be issued a transfer unless there are definite charges preferred against you.

Exceptions may be made for ministers moving to serve at General Headquarters, for those who are retired from active ministry, for those who are in the Armed Forces currently on active duty, for those who are serving on the faculties of Assemblies of God schools, for those who are appointed home missionaries retaining membership in their home districts, for evangelists residing outside their home districts, and for students in schools outside their home districts.

Ministers coming from another district to pastor in the Montana District shall be expected to transfer within 90 days of entrance into their new pastorate.

REINSTATEMENTS

Applicants for reinstatement must complete the form provided by the Network Office. If the applicant has been terminated for 2 years, you will be required to furnish three references who will recommend you for reinstatement and fill out everything on the reinstatement checklist. If the applicant has been terminated for 7 years, you will be required to take the written examination according to the category of credential being applied for fill out everything on the reinstatement list and will have to be approved at a general council Executive Presbytery meeting. All applicants for reinstatement shall be required to meet with the Network Credentials Committee.

Berean School of the Bible Ministerial Studies Diploma (1990-present)

The General Secretary's office will accept coursework based on ministerial requirements from 1990-present if all courses required for a particular level of credentials have been completed. Applicants for credentials who started but did not complete their studies should work with Global University's Berean School of the Bible to fill in any gaps in order to satisfy the educational requirements for credentials. The criteria used in these cases will be the current educational requirements or those immediately preceding the current requirements.

1990-1996

Certified Minister

BIB101 Bible Survey
 BIB103 Old Testament Studies (I, II, & III)
 BIB152 Life of Christ
 BIB255 Acts
 BIB259M First Corinthians
 PTH145 Principles of Administration
 PTH281 A/G Constitution & Bylaws
 THE231 The Holy Spirit

License

BIB161 Pauline Epistles
 BIB315 Bible History & Geography
 PTH283 Pastoral Theology I
 PTH323 Sermon Preparation
 PTH331 Principles of Counseling
 THE108 Prophetic Light
 THE201 Doctrines of the Bible
 THE356 History of the A/G

Ordination

BIB164 Hebrews & General Epistles
 BIB256 Romans
 BIB267 Studies in Revelation
 PTH285 Parliamentary Law
 PTH371M Pastor, Church & Law
 Pastoral Theology II (course never written)
 PTH385 History of Missions
 PTH441 Leadership in Christian Education
 THE351 History of the Church

1997-2005

Certified Minister

BIB103 Old Testament Survey
 BIB113 New Testament Survey
 BIB152 Life of Christ
 MIN105 How to Study the Bible
 MIN213 Soul Winning
 MIN232 Marriage and Family
 MIN323 Sermon Preparation
 MIN357 A/G History & Polity
 THE113 Introduction to Theology
 THE141 Biblical Theology of Prayer
 THE356 History of A/G Missions

License

BIB232 Genesis
 BIB241 Psalms
 BIB255 Acts OR
 (BIB121 *Introduction to Hermeneutics* if Acts was previously completed)
 BIB315 Bible History & Geography OR
 BIB316 Geography of the Holy Land
 MIN145 Church Leadership & Admin
 MIN417 Ministerial Ethics
 MIN441 Leadership in Christian Education
 MIN344 Expository Preaching
 THE221 Systematic Theology I
 THE222 Systematic Theology II
 THE351 History of the Church

Ordination

BIB215 Romans
 BIB259 I & II Corinthians
 BIB378 Apologetics
 BIB421 Isaiah OR
 BIB164 Hebrews & General Epistles
 MIN111 Biblical Counseling
 MIN333 Cults & World Religions
 MIN337 Cross Cultural Communications
 MIN371 Church and Law
 MIN411 Pastoral Theology
 PTH341 Theology & Practice of Worship
 THE245 Eschatology

2006-Present

Certified Minister

BIB114 Christ in the Synoptic Gospels
 BIB115 Acts
 BIB117 Prison Epistles
 BIB121 Introduction to Hermeneutics
 MIN123 The Local Church in Evangelism
 MIN171 Spirit Empowered Churches (required January 2019)
 MIN181 Relationships & Ethics in Ministry
 (MIN381 Pastoral Ministry was allowed in 2006 only)
 MIN191 Beginning Ministerial Internship
 THE114 Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine
 THE142 A/G History, Missions, & Gov.

License

BIB212 New Testament Survey
 BIB214 Old Testament Survey
 BIB215 Romans
 MIN223 Introduction to Homiletics
 MIN251 Effective Leadership
 MIN261 Intro to A/G Missions*
 MIN281 Conflict Management
 MIN291 Intermediate Ministerial Internship
 THE211 Intro to Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective
 THE245 Eschatology

Ordination

BIB313 Corinthian Correspondence
 BIB318 Pentateuch
 BIB322 Poetic Books
 MIN325 Preaching in the Contemporary World
 MIN327 Church Admin, Finance, & Law
 MIN381 Pastoral Ministry OR
 (MIN181 Relationships & Ethics if Pastoral Min was completed for Certified Minister)
 MIN391 Advanced Ministerial Internship
 THE311 Prayer and Worship

2006-Present

Transitional License

(follow only if student completed all Certified courses required before 2006)

| | |
|---|---|
| BIB115 Acts | MIN261 Introduction to A/G Missions* |
| BIB117 Prison Epistles | MIN281 Conflict Management |
| BIB215 Romans | MIN281 Intermediate Ministerial Internship |
| MIN181 Relationships and Ethics <u>OR</u> (MIN381 Pastoral Ministry was allowed in 2006) | THE114 Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine |
| MIN251 Effective Leadership | THE245 Eschatology |

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD CREDENTIALS EXAMINATIONS

This chart indicates which new exams are required for each credential level, based on the type of application that is being submitted.

Districts have the option to begin using the new exams for certified and licensed applications received into the district office between January 1, 2019, and March 31, 2019.

Applications for ministers upgrading to ordination that are received into the district office during the transition period of January 1, 2019, and March 31, 2019, will be required to take the current ordained exam. They are not exempt from taking the exam.

The new exams and procedures for all credential levels will be required for applications received into the district office beginning April 1, 2019.

| | Type of Application | Bible Knowledge | Doctrine | Polity | No Exam |
|------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------|----------|--------|---------|
| Certified | New | X | X | | |
| | Fast Track | | | | X |
| | Reinstatement (after 7 years) | X | X | | |
| Licensed | New | X | X | X | |
| | Fast Track | | | | X |
| | Upgrade (from Certified) | | | X | |
| | Reinstatement (after 7 years) | X | X | X | |
| Ordained | New | X | X | X | |
| | Recognize Previous Ordination | X | X | X | |
| | World AG Fellowship Transfers | | | | X |
| | Fast Track | | | | X |
| | Upgrade (from Certified) | | | X | |
| | Upgrade (from Licensed) | | | | X |
| | Reinstatement (after 7 years) | X | X | X | |