



Called to Ministry: What Steps Do I Take?

Ordination in the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region



The Call of God

I sense God is calling me to vocational ministry. What should I do?

Pray, meditate on God's Word, and seek clarification from the Holy Spirit.



Talk with your pastor.



Listen for voices of affirmation from your church family.



Requirements for ABC Ordination

Sponsorship by a local ABCCR church



College and Seminary Degrees (Bachelors & M.Div. or equivalent)



A Call to an ABCCR Church or Institutional Ministry



Requirements for ABC Ordination

Completion of a Course in American Baptist History & Polity (or equivalent)

Acceptance of the ABC Ministerial Covenant & Code of Ethics

A License For Ordination conferred at least six months prior to ordination

Completed candidacy assessment process with approved Career Development Center or service

Requirements for ABC Ordination

National Criminal Background Check



Write Your Ordination Paper

Pass Examination by Area or Association Ordination Council



Steps to Take

Local Church sends letter of sponsorship to Region Council on the Ministry (RCOM)

Candidate Selects a Sponsor/Mentor to Walk Alongside During the Process



Candidate Meets with Area RCOM representatives

Steps to Take

- ▶ Enter into Watch Care Relationship
- ▶ Write Ordination Paper
- ▶ Review Paper with RCOM representatives
- ▶ Upon RCOM recommendation, church calls an Ordination Council

Steps to Take

- ▶ Ordination Council examines candidate and makes recommendation
 - Proceed with ordination
 - Do not proceed with ordination
 - Proceed with ordination upon completion of specified requirements
- ▶ Ordination Service is scheduled
- ▶ Church Ordains Candidate in Service of Celebration and Worship

The Ordination Paper

- ▶ 15–20 pages expressing personal Christian experience and theology
- ▶ Paper is reviewed by Sponsor/Mentor and RCOM representatives
- ▶ Copies of the Ordination Paper are sent to Area/Association churches prior to Ordination Council

The Ordination Paper

Summarize your faith journey. Include:

- ▶ Profession of faith
- ▶ Church membership
- ▶ Significant church responsibilities
- ▶ Call to ministry
- ▶ Christian growth and educational preparation

The Ordination Paper

Statement of Theology

- ▶ Understanding of God
- ▶ Sin and redemption
- ▶ The Incarnation
- ▶ Christian growth
- ▶ Revelation: how God speaks



The Ordination Paper

Statement of Theology

- ▶ The Bible
- ▶ The Resurrection
- ▶ Humankind
- ▶ The Church and the Kingdom
- ▶ Eschatology
- ▶ Theological principles central to your own formation of Christian faith or theology



ABCCR Policy Statement

In accordance with the adopted policy of the ABC/USA and the ABCCR that *"the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching,"* the Region Council on the Ministry will not recommend for licensing, ordination, recognition of ordination, or privilege of call any person known to be a practicing homosexual.

Three Tracks for Ordination



Track I

The requirements for ABC ordination listed above reflect the standards of Track I ordination.

Tracks for Ordination

Track II

Full time ministerial experience as an equivalent to educational preparation may be granted on the basis of one year of educational equivalency for every two years of ministerial experience.

Maximum equivalency allowed is three years

All other requirements remain in place.

Tracks for Ordination

Track III (RCOM approval must be given prior to pursuit of Track III ordination)

Candidates must qualify under one of the following requirements:

- Satisfactory completion of educational requirements for ordination in another country.
- Satisfactory completion of ABCCR approved lay pastoral training course.
- Satisfactory completion of at least 7 years of lay pastoral service with at least 3 consecutive years in an ABCCR church

All other requirements remain in place.

Region Council on the Ministry

- ▶ Is composed of 12 representatives, both lay and clergy, from across the Central Region
- ▶ Oversees the licensing and ordination procedures of the ABCCR
- ▶ Helps & guides candidates toward denominationally recognized credentialing

Region Council on the Ministry

- ▶ Works with the local church
- ▶ Deals with issues of clergy misconduct which may result in censure or withdrawal of denominational recognition of credentials

Find out who are the RCOM representatives from your Area.

For More Information Contact

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