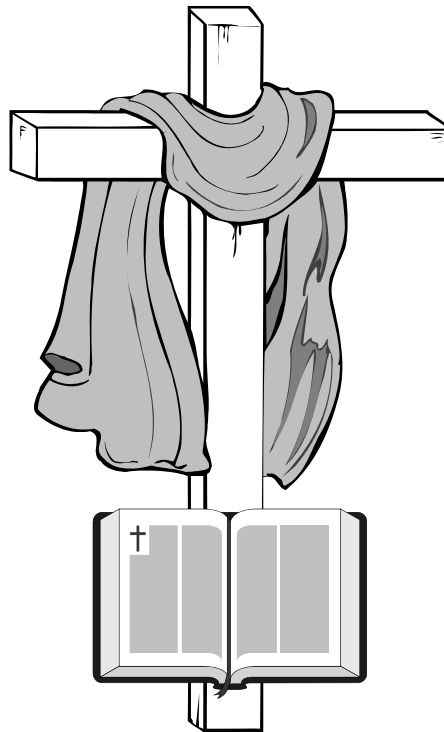




A WEST VIRGINIA BAPTIST CONVENTION RESOURCE

A MANUAL REGARDING SUGGESTED PROCEDURES FOR ORDINATION



WEST VIRGINIA BAPTIST CONVENTION
THE COMMITTEE ON MINISTERIAL STANDING
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INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Ordination is the act of the church by which, in the name of God, it delegates to a qualified person who has responded to the call of God a wide range of ministerial functions and responsibilities.

Baptists long have both celebrated the autonomy of the local church and joined in voluntary association with each other for mission endeavors best accomplished by the wider Christian community. Thus the local Baptist church retains the right to decide for itself, but in matters of faith and polity also recognizes interdependence with other Baptist churches and organizations as beneficial to full ministry.

The Committee on Ministerial Standing of the West Virginia Baptist Convention (WVBC) is charged with the responsibility for coordinating and reviewing those things having to do with ministry in the WVBC churches. This document has been prepared as an aid to the churches and the candidates for ministry in our region. It is designed to: 1.) give guidance to the prospective candidates for ordination and the churches from which they come; and 2.) encourage standards which will insure the integrity of the Gospel Ministry.

- 1.** It is the right and responsibility of the local church to ordain those whom it recognizes as being called of God. That ordination may be particular for the local church or it may be general on behalf of all churches of like faith and order. It is generally done in coordination with the association churches.
- 2.** Because of the mobility and itinerancy of the ordained clergy, it is physically impossible for the local ordaining church to be responsible for the faithful service of the ordained for the many years of an individual's ministry. It is the expectation that the region is responsible for the counseling, consulting, monitoring, and continuing standing of the clergy for service.
- 3.** There are various practices in Baptist churches regarding the timing and forming of ordination. Every means should be tested for the development of the kind of faithful and vital ministry needed now in the name of Christ. We should be concerned not only about present needs, but also that our ministry be equipped to match the challenges of the future.
- 4.** It is recognized that each individual Baptist church is autonomous with respect to the standards and procedures of ordination. However, unless it fully cooperates in maintaining the commonly accepted standards, a local church should not assume its action on ordination will be recognized by the churches of the wider fellowship.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

One of the commonly held convictions of churches today is that all Christians are ministers who participate in Christ's own ministry. This is evidenced in the baptism of the individual Christian and in the doctrine of "the priesthood of all believers," where within faith communities individuals inspired by the Holy Spirit are both competent and responsible for approaching God on behalf of themselves and others.

Baptists further asserted that any member of the church could be called upon to exercise all ministerial functions and responsibilities, even though this did not ordinarily happen. When a radical doctrine of the priesthood of all believers was combined with a strictly independent concept of the local church, with each congregation directly responsible to Christ, and its officers having no standing outside its membership, there seemed to be little practical or doctrinal foundation for a special order of ministry, the ordained ministry.

But the actual situation was not that simple. Baptist long have possessed a "separate" or set-apart" ministry that has served a constituency wider than the local congregation. Ordination has tended to be the setting apart (by the call of God and the action of the church) of one of the many ministers to perform special functions of ministry on behalf of the community of faith.

Ordination historically has been understood by many WVBC congregations as affirming that an individual has had a call to this specialized ministry and has met the necessary qualifications for carrying it out.

Although most often a local congregation has taken the initiative in ordaining that individual, it did so in cooperation with other congregations. This participation of a group of churches in ordination has given the rite much more than merely local significance. In fact, if the ordination was carried out according to the standards of the WVBC churches, it represented a regional recognition of the individual's call and qualifications for the ordained ministry of Christ's universal church.

In the primitive church, the rite of ordination climaxed in the act of "laying on of hands." This act indicated that the person so ordained was not only consecrated to God's service and thus made holy, but also was commissioned to serve on behalf of those who laid on hands (see Acts 6:6 and 13:13; I Timothy 4:14, 2 Timothy 1:6). In addition, the act and the accompanying prayer, which invoked God's grace upon the ordained, implied the ordinand's authority to share the functions and responsibilities of those who laid hands upon the individual.

This meaning has continued to be central in ordination. Today, the act of laying on of hands signifies and focuses in one person, the ministry of many persons who in themselves represent the wider church of Jesus Christ.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

1. “Committee on Ministerial Standing” (COMS) refers to a regional body which is responsible for the implementation and oversight of policies, criteria, and procedures for ministerial accreditation. COMS is accountable to the Executive Board of the WVBC through the Leadership Commission of the Executive Board.

2. “Committee on Ordination” or “Ordination Committee” is the generic term for an association committee charged with the oversight of the ordination process. This is generally a standing committee of each association.

3. “Mentor” is a person appointed by the Association Ordination Committee to assist the candidate in the preparation of the position paper and its presentation before the Association Ordination Council.

4. “Licensing,” as used in this document, is a preliminary step toward ordination.

5. “Ordination Council” is a group of clergy and laity from the association, called together by a local church to examine the fitness of a candidate for ordination and recommend to the local church whether or not they should proceed with the ordination of the candidate.

I. THE LICENSED MINISTER

The granting of a license to preach the gospel is a procedure utilized by the local church to recognize a person’s call to ministry, and to offer that person the opportunity to perform the functions of ministry.

A. A local church may, by formal action of the congregation, grant a license to preach the gospel to a member of that congregation. Such a license should be granted only to those members who have given evidence of the following qualifications:

1. A clear testimony of salvation by faith in the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ and a consistent Christian walk and testimony; and

2. A willingness to bear responsibility and employ life and spiritual gifts for Christ through the ministry of the church.

B. A license, when granted by a church, should be for a limited period of time (preferably one, but not more than four years) and is subject to review, revocation, or renewal by the church granting the license. (See Appendix E.)

C. Licensed ministers may be authorized by the church served to officiate at the Ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper; as well as to perform the other duties that are a part of the pastoral ministry.

D. Those, who, in the course of ministry, contemplate officiating at a marriage ceremony, will need to consult with the Clerk of the County Court regarding legal requirements.

E. When a candidate is licensed, it is recommended that the church contact the Association Ordination Committee, so the candidate may receive guidance and counsel relative to ordination. It is also recommended that the area minister be notified, so that he may also counsel the candidate for ordination.

II. THE CANDIDATE FOR ORDINATION

A candidate for ordination, before meeting with the Association Ordination Committee, should be aware of the requirements of that Association concerning ordination. A copy of the Association standards, or in their absence, a copy of this document, should be sent to the candidate as soon as the Committee is notified. While these standards will vary, some of our Associations have the following expectations:

A. The candidate for ordination shall normally have been licensed to the Gospel Ministry by a West Virginia Baptist Convention church for at least one year prior to the application for ordination.

B. The candidate shall have either a definite call to a local church ministry at the time of ordination or have substantial reason for requesting ordination. The candidate should have definite plans to enter one of the following fields of ministry:

- 1.** Local church ministry, including all staff who exercise pastoral functions.
- 2.** Mission service on the home or foreign field in which pastoral functions will be exercised.
- 3.** Specialized ministries, e.g. institutional, military, or academic chaplaincy; pastoral counseling; full-time evangelism; or a staff position in a church-related institution, where preaching, teaching, and/or pastoral work is required.

C. The candidate's academic preparation for the ministry shall lead to one of the following two levels of accreditation;

- 1.** West Virginia Baptist Convention Accreditation:

a. Accepts four years of college from an accredited institution of higher learning (B.A., B.S. degree or equivalent) plus three years of seminary (B.D., M. Div. Degree or equivalent). This is the preferred path leading to accreditation of ordination by the West Virginia Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Churches of the USA, and candidates for ministry are encouraged to pursue this.

b. Those ministers not meeting the above standards of education must qualify in one of the following categories to make application for state and national accreditation:

1.) Completion of the Pastoral Ministry program of the West Virginia Baptist Convention School of Christian Studies;

2.) Completion, by audit or credit, of one-half of the courses of an accredited theological seminary; or

3.) The equivalent of one of the above, as approved by the Committee on Ministerial Standing.

In any of these cases, a functional knowledge of American Baptist history and polity will be required. Those normally can be satisfied by completion of a seminary level course on both the history and polity of American Baptist or by completion of the School of Christian Studies course(s) on Baptist history and polity.

2. Association Accreditation: When wider recognition is not desired by the candidate, ordination can be accredited by the local association by meeting the standards of the association in which membership is held, or which the candidate serves. Associations are encouraged to adopt the guidelines set forth in this manual as the norm for their policies and procedures for ordination. Such action would help to provide consistency, integrity and order for the candidate, who later seeks accreditation of ordination with the West Virginia Baptist Convention and the ABC/USA.

III. THE ROLE OF THE ASSOCIATION ORDINATION COMMITTEE AND THE PROCEDURE FOR ORDINATION

The Association Ordination Committee shall be responsible for advising the Association, the local churches, and the prospective candidate for ordination in regard to ordination procedures. The procedure for pursuing ordination to the Gospel Ministry shall be as follows:

A. The church of which the candidate is a member shall vote to initiate the ordination procedure, and shall by letter, request the Association Ordination Committee to meet with the candidate for counseling and advice. The letter requesting a meeting of this committee shall be signed by the clerk of the church, and shall state the date on which the church formally took action. A copy of this letter should also be sent to the area minister.

B. First meeting of the Association Ordination Committee and the candidate. The candidate will meet with the Association Ordination Committee on a mutually acceptable date.

1. The candidate should be prepared to respond to the following areas:

a. An explanation of conversion, call to the ministry, experience in Christian service, preparation for ministry, and perceived goals for ministry.

b. Willingness to support and participate within the life and witness of the Association, the West Virginia Baptist Convention, and the American Baptist Churches of the U.S.A.

2. The Association Ordination Committee should be prepared to:

a. Review the process of ordination and the requirements of the Association in regard to the level of accreditation the candidate is seeking.

b. Give guidelines for the paper to be prepared by the candidate. (See Appendix A)

c. Assign a mentor from the association to assist the candidate in the preparation of the candidate's position paper. This mentor will continue to counsel the candidate throughout the entire ordination process.

d. Provide the candidate with a copy of the Covenant and Code of Ethics as adopted by the West Virginia Baptist Minister's Council and the Committee on Ministerial Standing. (See Appendix B)

e. Set time for the next meeting with the candidate.

C. Second meeting of the Association Ordination Committee and the candidate.

1. Responsibilities of the candidate in relation to the second meeting include:

- a. Two weeks prior to the second meeting, copies of the candidate's position paper will need to be mailed to each member of the Association Ordination Committee.
- b. The candidate will present the paper and be prepared to answer questions for the Association Ordination Committee.
- c. The candidate will state a willingness to sign and support the Covenant and Code of Ethics.

2. Responsibilities of the Association Ordination Committee in relation to the second meeting include:

- a. Upon receipt of the candidate's position paper, read it and be prepared to discuss the contents at the meeting.
- b. Within two weeks of this interview, the committee shall inform the candidate and the church, in writing, of its decisions and recommendations in one of the following areas.
 - 1) Recommend to the local church that they proceed with the ordination proceed by calling for an Ordination Council.
 - 2) If the committee is not prepared to recommend proceeding with the ordination, the committee will continue to work with the candidate in those areas needing improvement.
- c. Discuss with the candidate the conditions by which the removal or withdrawal of recognition of ordination may occur. (See Section VII)

IV. THE CHURCH CALLS FOR THE ORDINATION COUNCIL

The Ordination Council shall be responsible for examining the candidate's conversion, call to ministry, preparation for ministry, and doctrinal views.

A. A letter to each member church of the Association shall be mailed at least two weeks before the date set for the meeting. A copy of the candidate's prepared written statement shall be included.

B. All churches of the Association shall be invited to send representatives, as determined by the Association, to sit on the Association Ordination Council. The area minister should also be invited to sit on the Ordination Council.

C. The Association Ordination Council and the Ordination Service should not be held on the same day.

V. THE ASSOCIATION ORDINATION COUNCIL

The Association Ordination Council, upon assembly, shall be constituted of representatives from at least a majority of the churches of the Association. The council will be conducted in the following manner:

A. The pastor of the requesting church or an officer of the church, shall call the meeting to order with prayer.

B. The council will select a moderator to preside and a clerk to record actions of the council.

C. The moderator shall call upon the church clerk to read that portion of the minutes which state the church's action in calling for the ordination of the candidate, and the statement of the recommendation of the Association Ordination Committee.

D. The pastor or an officer of the church shall introduce the candidate.

E. The candidate's position paper shall be presented at this time. Following the reading of each section of this paper, the candidate shall submit to questions about the same from the members of the council. Only the candidate's views are to be discussed.

F. After the examination is completed, the candidate shall be dismissed, or the council shall adjourn to another room, so the council may discuss any point in question. A motion is in order to recommend, or not recommend, the candidate for ordination. Only members of the council are entitled to vote. The vote may be taken by written ballot. The candidate shall be returned to the council, or the council will return to the initial room, and the candidate informed concerning the action taken.

G. The clerk of the Association Ordination Council shall send a written copy of the proceedings and decision of the council to the candidate, the church, the Association clerk, the area minister, and the Committee on Ministerial Standing of the West Virginia Baptist Convention.

H. If the vote is unfavorable, the reason shall be stated in the written statement of the action to the church and the candidate. Whenever an Association Ordination Council recommends that a church defer or not proceed with the ordination of a candidate, the following courses of action are open:

1. The church may wait until the conditions which cause the recommendation change sufficiently to warrant requesting the reexamination of the candidate.

2. The church may appeal to the Committee on Ministerial Standing of the West Virginia Baptist Convention for a hearing, if it considers the decision of the Association Ordination Council to have been arbitrary or unfair.
 - a. The Committee on Ministerial Standing shall arrange a meeting of its members to which shall be invited:
 - 1) The moderator and clerk of the Association Ordination Council.
 - 2) The candidate, the mentor, and two delegates from the candidate's church.
 - 3) The Executive Minister of the West Virginia Baptist Convention or a representative of the region staff.

 - b. Procedure for the Appeal Hearing by the Committee on Ministerial Standing
 - 1) Hearing convened and presided over by the chairperson of the committee.
 - 2) Reviews the records of the Association Ordination Council.
 - 3) Receives reports relative to the action taken by the Association Ordination Council.
 - 4) Decides, by vote of the members of the Committee on Ministerial Standing, whether or not the evidence presented warrants the recalling of the Association Ordination Council.

3. Should the decision of the recalled Association Ordination Council be negative, any further action taken by the church, which presented the candidate to ordain that person shall be considered to be unilateral and without standing. Should there be a favorable decision by the Association Ordination Council, the local church may arrange for a service of ordination.

VI. THE ORDINATION SERVICE

The local church is the ordaining body, not the council. Following official notice of the Association Ordination Council's approval of the candidate for ordination, the church shall plan with the candidate for the Service of Ordination. The local church should consider the following items as a guide for this important service in the life of the candidate and the church.

- A.** Selection of a date at least two weeks after the action of the Association Ordination Council.

- B.** Selection of persons to participate.
- C.** Instruct the church clerk to send letters of invitation to all churches of the Association, and to others as desired. An invitation should also be sent to the area minister.
- D.** Send an invitation and an order of service to each person invited to participate in the service.
- E.** Secure some token of recognition. This may be a Bible or other book suitable for the candidate.
- F.** Secure a suitable Certificate of Ordination and have it properly filled out. Also secure a copy of the Covenant and Code of Ethics. These may be obtained from the office of the West Virginia Baptist Convention. (See Appendix F)
- G.** Arrange for special music in the service and a reception following, if these are desired.
- H.** Arrange for printed programs. (A suggested order of service is included in Appendix C.)
- I.** Following the service, send the information and a picture, if possible, for use in the WEST VIRGINIA BAPTIST.

VII. REMOVAL OR WITHDRAWAL OF RECOGNITION OF ORDINATION

Due to immoral behavior or changes in theological beliefs, it is sometimes necessary to question the calling and ordination of a minister. Such questions may be directed to the Ordination Committee of the Association and, should they find there is substance to the charges, the Association Ordination Committee should ask the ordaining church to withdraw the ordination of the individual.

If recognition of ordination goes beyond the local church and association, and if just cause regarding immoral behavior or unethical practices can be proven, the Committee on Ministerial Standing of the West Virginia Baptist Convention may decide to withdraw or suspend recognition/accreditation of ordination. The document *An Ecclesiastical Process for Review of Clergy Misconduct and Ministerial Standing* details the process the Committee on Ministerial Standing uses for such reviews. Copies of this document may be obtained from the area minister or the offices of the West Virginia Baptist Convention.

Also, as it sometimes happens, a person may leave the active ordained ministry for reasons other than retirement. Should the individual continue to lay claim to the privileges of a title or a calling, without a ministry, the Association Ordination Committee may ask the ordaining church to withdraw their ordination.

APPENDIX A

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR A CANDIDATE'S POSITION PAPER

To assist the candidate for ordination in stating their calling and doctrinal beliefs when they meet with the Association Ordination Committee and the Association Ordination Council, it is recommended that a paper be prepared in advance. This paper should be mailed to the Association Ordination Committee at least two weeks prior to the meeting at which it will be considered. The pastor of one of the Association churches should be appointed as a mentor for the candidate to aid in preparing the paper and discussing it before the council.

A. Format

The paper should:

1. Be typed and double-spaced
2. Include citations of references and, if possible, line numbering
3. Use good grammatical form
4. Not exceed fifteen pages
5. Be a statement of personal beliefs

B. Content

1. Conversion
2. Call to the Ministry
3. Preparation for the Work
4. Experience in Christian Service
5. Views concerning the following doctrines:
 - a. Scripture
 - b. God
 - c. Jesus Christ
 - d. The Holy Spirit
 - e. Man
 - f. Sin
 - g. Salvation
 - h. The Church
 - 1) Nature of the Church
 - 2) Mission of the Church
 - 3) Ordinances of the Church
 - i. Satan
 - j. Last Things
 - k. Denominational Loyalty
 - 1) Statement of understanding of American Baptist history and polity
 - 2) Acceptance of the Covenant and Code of Ethics (Appendix B)

APPENDIX B

THE COVENANT AND CODE OF ETHICS FOR PROFESSIONAL CHURCH LEADERS OF THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.

Having accepted God's call to leadership in Christ's Church, I covenant with God to serve Christ and the Church with God's help, 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 Minister's 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 professional church leaders should not expect or require fees for pastoral services from constituents they serve, when these constituents are helping pay their salaries.
- † I will not seek personal favors or discounts on the basis of my professional 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, financial responsibility, regularly engaging in educational and recreational activities for professional 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 publically support my colleagues who experience discrimination on the basis of gender, race, age, marital status, national origin, physical impairment, or disability.
- † I will, upon my resignation or retirement, sever my professional church leadership relations with my former constituents, and will not make professional contacts in the field of another professional church leader without his/her request and/or consent.
- † I will hold in confidence any privileged communication received by me during the conduct of my ministry. I will not disclose confidential communications 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 the parishioner/client will cause imminent, life-threatening, or substantial harm to self or others, or unless the privilege is waived by those giving the information.
- † I will not proselytize from other Christian churches.
- † 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 _____

APPENDIX C

SUGGESTED ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR AN ORDINATION SERVICE

Hymn

Scripture Reading

Prayer

Reading by the Church Clerk of the pertinent actions taken:

Vote of the Church to call for the Ordination Council

Recommendation of the Ordination Council

Ordination Sermon

Charge to the Candidate

Charge to the Church

Prayer of Ordination

Laying on of Hands

Formal Signing of the Covenant and Code of Ethics

Presentation of the Certificate and Token of Recognition

Welcome into the Fellowship of Ministry

Benediction by the Candidate

Greetings from Friends and the Reception

APPENDIX D

RECOGNITION OF ORDINATION FOR NON-AMERICAN BAPTISTS

The recognition process is initiated when an American Baptist congregation desiring recognition for a person previously ordained by another denomination or contacts the Association Ordination Committee or the Committee on Ministerial Standing.

A. Association Recognition

The first step in wider recognition is for the church to contact the local Association Ordination Committee. This committee will meet with the candidate to review the candidate's conversion, call to ministry, educational background, ministerial experience, doctrinal beliefs, denominational loyalty, and moral integrity. When no wider recognition is desired, the Association Ordination Committee is the appropriate group to grant Association recognition of ordination. When wider recognition is desired, their recommendation needs to be secured before application is made to the Committee on Ministerial Standing.

B. Regional and National Recognition

The committee on Ministerial Standing of the West Virginia Baptist Convention is empowered to grant regional and national recognition/accreditation of the ordination of an individual previously ordained by another denomination. The process is as follows:

1. The individual desiring recognition of ordination shall provide the following items to the Committee on Ministerial Standing of the West Virginia Baptist Convention.
 - a. Completed application.
 - b. Letter of ministerial standing from the previous denomination or region.
 - c. Verification of prior ordination and academic work from college and seminary. (Photocopies are acceptable.)
 - d. References from three persons familiar with the applicant's previous ministry.
 - e. A recommendation from the Association Ordination Committee in the association where the individual is now serving.
2. Following receipt of the above information, the Committee on Ministerial Standing will meet with the individual. At this meeting, the committee undertakes the following functions:

- a.** Reviews the required credentials (as stated above in section A) which were submitted prior to the meeting.
- b.** Interviews the individual to become better acquainted with his/her personal background, faith, baptism, ministerial experience, educational background, and attitude toward and understanding of American Baptist tradition and polity, including the work and ministry of the West Virginia Baptist Convention.
- c.** Asks questions of the individual regarding:
 - 1.** Reasons for entering the ministry of the West Virginia Baptist Convention.
 - 2.** Intentions to participate in the fellowship and ministry of the West Virginia Baptist Convention and the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A.
 - 3.** Willingness to sign and support the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Professional Church Leaders of the American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. (see Appendix B)

3. As a result of this meeting, the Committee on Ministerial Standing may arrange for the individual to complete an American Baptist /West Virginia Baptist orientation course or other training the committee deems necessary to assure familiarity with American Baptist history and polity.

4. Copies of the decision of the Committee on Ministerial Standing are forwarded by the Executive Minister to the ABC/USA Registry of Professional Church Leaders.

C. The Committee on Ministerial Standing also furnishes the person with a letter and/or certificate indicating that the previous ordination is recognized by the West Virginia Baptist Convention.

APPENDIX E

RECOGNITION OF ORDINATION FOR THOSE COMING FROM ANOTHER REGION WITH ACCREDITED ORDINATION OF THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCH OF THE USA

The Committee on Ministerial Standing of the West Virginia Baptist Convention is empowered to grant regional and national recognition/accreditation of an individual previously ordained by another region of the ABC/USA. The process is as follows:

1. The individual desiring recognition of ordination shall provide the following items to the Committee on Ministerial Standing of the West Virginia Baptist Convention.
 - a. Completed application
 - b. Verification of Ordination and academic work from college and seminary (photocopies are acceptable).
 - c. Letter of reference from someone who is familiar with the individual's ministry. (executive minister, area minister, etc.)
2. Following the receipt of the above information, the Committee on Ministerial Standing will meet with the individual. At this meeting, the committee undertakes the following functions:
 - a. Review the individual's credentials.
 - b. Review the candidate's conversion, call to ministry, education background, ministerial experience, doctrinal beliefs, denominational loyalty and moral integrity.
 - c. Review the Covenant and Code of Ethics.
3. As a result of this meeting the Committee on Ministerial Standing will do one of the following:
 - a. Grant accreditation of their ordination.
 - b. Recommend further study in specific area(s).
 - c. Deny accreditation.
4. Copies of the decision of the Committee on Ministerial Standing are forwarded by the West Virginia Baptist Convention to the ABC/USA Registry of Professional Church Leaders.
5. Following recognition, the Committee on Ministerial Standing also furnishes the person with a letter and/or certificate indicating that the previous ordination is accredited by the West Virginia Baptist Convention.

Certificate of License

This Is To Certify

John Doe

Who has given evidence that God has called him into

THE GOSPEL MINISTRY

Was licensed to preach the Gospel as he may have opportunity,
and to exercise his gifts in the work of the Ministry

By Your Baptist Church

At Any City, West Virginia

On the 1st day of February, 2002

Clerk

Pastor

Date of Expiration

Certificate of Ordination

Moderator of Ordaining Council

Pastor

Church Clerk

Chairman of Deacons

APPENDIX G

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that upon the recommendation and request of *Your Baptist Church at Any City, West Virginia*, which had full and sufficient opportunity for judging his gifts, and after satisfactory examination by us in regard to his Christian experience, call to the ministry, and views of Biblical doctrine,

John Doe

was solemnly and publicly set apart and ordained to the work of

THE GOSPEL MINISTRY

by authority and order of
*The Your Baptist Church at
Any City, West Virginia* on February 1, 2002

