

Potomac Conference Ordination/Commissioning Track

The ordination/commissioning committee is chaired by the President and made up of Administration, Ministerial Associates, and several ordained pastors chosen by the Conference Executive Committee. In the Adventist system, ordination or commissioning to the gospel ministry is initiated by conference leadership rather than by the ministerial intern. This overview is presented as a general outline of the anticipated process so interns have an idea of what to expect.

I. What is the general length of time in pastorate before ordination or commissioning?

Four to five years with Masters of Divinity degree or Masters in Religion/Theology

Regarding education, it is the practice of Potomac Conference to send pastoral interns, who have an undergraduate degree in theology, to Andrews University Theological Seminary to obtain a Masters of Divinity Degree before ordination/commissioning. If the intern is 35 years old or older, then they will need to obtain the Masters degree in Pastoral Ministries offered through Andrews with classes offered locally twice each year through Washington Adventist University.

II. When do interns get on the ordination/commissioning track?

Pastors are presumed to be on the ordination/commissioning track when they are hired full time with the expectation that they will have ongoing employment. They are considered "interns" and required to take part in all intern meetings.

III. When do interns meet with the ordination/commissioning committee?

- A. An intern without a Seminary degree is scheduled for interviews after their 2nd, 4th and 6th years of ministry in the field.
- B. An intern with a Seminary degree is scheduled for interviews after their 2nd and 3.5 years of ministry in the field.
- C. An intern who has had two years of field experience will be interviewed prior to going to Seminary. Following Seminary, the 2nd interview will be done after two additional years of field experience.

The ordination/commissioning committee will interview candidates ascertaining their ministry development and experiences. With input from "mentor" pastors, local church leaders, the ordination/commissioning committee will make specific suggestions for growth and development. These will be shared with the intern by Administration.

IV. What is needed before, during and after the ordination/commissioning interview?

- A. Please send the following items to the Ministerial Department at the Potomac Conference Office two weeks prior to your interview:
 - 1. Your resume.
 - 2. A written history of your ministry experience, including your *call to ministry* and your *philosophy of ministry*. This paper should not exceed four pages double-spaced.

- B. Please bring the following items to your interview:
 - 1. Some high quality digital pictures of you on a CD. The Conference will pay for these to be professionally taken if you do not have any high quality pictures.
 - 2. A brief biography, which will be printed in the service bulletin. It should be between 350-400 words.

- C. If the ordination/commissioning committee recommends you:
 - 1. We will contact you to select a date, time and the place for the service.
 - 2. We will need the name and phone number of the local florist your church uses.
 - 3. How many bulletins should we print for the ordination/commissioning service?

After this final interview, the ordination/commissioning committee may make additional recommendations regarding growth areas that need to be addressed or will vote to move ahead with the ordination/commissioning process. The ordination/commissioning committee recommends approval to the Potomac Conference Executive Committee, which in turn recommends approval to the Columbia Union Conference Executive Committee.

V. How will intern training be done?

The training program for ministerial interns is coordinated and supervised by the Potomac Conference Ministerial Department.

The Ministerial Director(s), in consultation with Administration, will assign each intern an ordained/commissioned pastor as a mentor. Mentors will arrange times for visits with their assigned intern five to six times a year. On one of these visits it is expected that the mentor will spend time observing the intern in action in a church board meeting, Bible study, visitation or some other area of ministry. Another visit is an opportunity for the intern to visit and observe the mentor in ministry in his or her district.

In addition to the above visits, the intern is encouraged to ask questions, seek counsel, or spend additional time with their mentor as they feel the need. In addition the intern can feel free to make contact with Administration, a Ministerial Director or any seasoned pastor in the conference for help and advice as desired or needed. The Ministerial Director(s) will coordinate additional training for both mentor pastors and interns.

VI. The intern training program is currently envisioned to be as follows:

Interns will meet five to six times per year. These meetings are not considered optional. It is expected that all topics presented at these training sessions will have been covered prior to

ordination. These general meetings will be for interns only and will be at the conference office or in the D.C. metro area churches.

One meeting each year will be held in conjunction with the annual minister's meetings in May at Camp Blue Ridge (CBR). Interns and families who come will be invited to be present an additional day for this meeting. Spouses are welcome and encouraged to sit in with the group. Conference Administrators, Ministerial Director(s), experienced pastors, and other guests will provide presentations.

VII. The following list contains some of the basic skills, values and experiences to be demonstrated or accomplished before an intern is ordained or commissioned:

- Active Interest File
- Anointings
- Appropriate boundaries
- Balanced judgment
- Christ-centered biblical preaching
- Church Board Chair experience
- Church Manual comprehension
- Develop a balanced sermonic year
- Develop a strategic plan for healthy church growth.
- Discipleship
- Funerals
- Leadership
- Preaching of a full prophecy evangelistic series (minimum of 16 meetings).
- Seminary or selected classes in recommended areas
- Soul Winner
- Spirituality
- Weddings

Voted by Potomac Conference Executive Committee on August 28, 2007