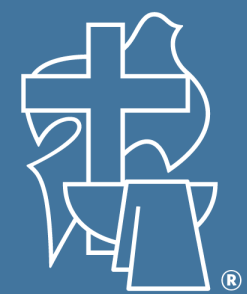


# Your Credentialing Journey

Ministry Credentialing with the BIC U.S.



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In its broadest sense, the term “minister” applies to all Christians. Each and every follower of Jesus is called to use his or her gifts in service to the Kingdom of God. In its more restrictive sense, “minister” refers to men and women who have been recognized by the Church as having a more specific call from God, and have the appropriate character and gifts to fulfill that call.

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# Why Credentialing?

Or, “why do I have to do all this work?”

## Denomination Perspective

- Guarding the Church
- Discerning Gifts
- Assigning to the Right Ministry

## Minister's Perspective

- External Affirmation
- Equipping for Service

# **Credentialing Process**

## **for Brethren in Christ U.S. Ministers**

- **Three Year Provisional License**
- **Six Year Ministry License**
- **Ordination**
- **Retirement**

# Three Year Provisional License

A three-year provisional license is issued to persons who have completed the ministry application and screening process and have also been assigned to a ministry position with or recognized by BIC U.S.

**The provisional license is valid for three years and cannot be renewed.**

## **Requirements:**

- Contact the Bishop
- Complete the *This I Believe* form
- Complete the *Personal Profile & Background Check* forms
- Interview with the Bishop

The Bishop will then make a referral to the Commission on Ministry & Doctrine

# Why “Provisional”?

## The Three Year Provisional License

- The BIC U.S. does not credential “for life”
- External affirmation of one’s ministry while they pursue other requirements
- Opportunity to discern alignment with BIC U.S. values
- Opportunity to discern ministry placement

# Six Year Ministry License

A six-year ministry license is issued to persons who, while holding a provisional license, met the criteria established by the Church to be issued a six-year ministry license.

**The six-year ministry license is renewable for as long as the minister meets the criteria established by BIC U.S.**

## **Requirements:**

- Continue serving in your *Ministry Assignment*
- Complete 2 *Core Courses*
- Complete the *Doctrinal Questionnaire & Oral Interview*

# Timeline to a Ministry License

## Going from “Provisional” to “Licensed”

### First Year of Provisional License

- Complete 1 Core Course
- Complete your *Doctrinal Questionnaire*

### Within Three Years of Provisional License

- Complete 1 additional Core Course
- Complete *Doctrinal Questionnaire Oral Interview*



# Core Courses

# The Core Courses

## Growing in Brethren in Christ Values

### **BIC History & Values**

This course traces the Brethren in Christ history from our founding in 18th century Anabaptism and Pietism through the Wesleyan movement in the 19th and 20th centuries. By exploring the healthy tensions present at the intersection of these theological streams, the course examines our history and how it continues to shape our core values today.

### **Leadership & Structure within the BIC U.S.**

This course explores the ways BIC U.S. congregations and pastors function on the local, regional, and denominational levels. By reading and discussing a handful of texts, participants explore leadership and local church ministry. And through class interaction, they come to a greater understanding and appreciation of Brethren in Christ ministry taking place in varying contexts.

# The Core Courses

## Growing in Brethren in Christ Values

### **Theology of the Church**

This core course examines the BIC U.S.' understandings of God's Kingdom, the Church, and its mission. In this course, participants trace the Church's development following the New Testament period, paying particular attention to the Anabaptist movement. Highlighting the nature of community, a two-kingdom theology, and the Church's role in peacemaking, this course explores the BIC's views on leadership, mission, and ethical living.

### **Theology of Salvation**

This course explores the Brethren in Christ perspectives on salvation, including sanctification and the nature of Christian living. By considering God's heart and character, participants examine the nature of sin, as well as the life and work of Jesus.

# Doctrinal Questionnaire

# What is the Doctrinal Questionnaire?

## Reflecting on Brethren in Christ Values

The ***Doctrinal Questionnaire*** (DQ) is a written questionnaire designed to assess areas of doctrinal and ministry compatibility with the Brethren in Christ U.S. It is to be completed and returned within twelve months after you have received a Provisional License.

The completed DQ is reviewed by the Bishop, a Commission on Ministry & Doctrine (CMD) member from their Conference, and a number of other ministers. The review of the DQ may lead to further conversation and/or reading/writing requests for the candidate.

Following this the candidate will meet with the bishop, the CMD member for the region, and several other ordained persons for a ***Doctrinal Questionnaire interview***. The purpose of this interview is to investigate further the possibility of ongoing credentialed ministry with BIC U.S.

# Doctrinal Questionnaire

## Topics Reviewed

- **Doctrine: 32 Questions** on The Scriptures, God/Trinity, Humanity & Sin, Salvation, The Church, Church Practices, Marriage & Sexuality
- **Practice: 7 Questions** on Christian Lifestyle, Ministry Case Studies, Response to Readings, Commitment to BIC Values

Your Doctrinal Questionnaire responses must not exceed 40 pages

# Ordination

Ordination marks the affirmation of the Church to the calling, preparation, character, gifts, and effective service of the minister. Ordination is given to persons who, while holding a six-year ministry license, met the criteria established by the Church to be ordained to Christian ministry. **Ordained status is subject to renewal every six years for as long as the minister meets the criteria established by BIC U.S.**

## Requirements:

- Continue serving in your *Ministry Assignment*
- Complete the *Educational Requirements*
- Complete all 4 Core Courses
- Attend the BIC U.S. *Leadership Orientation*
- Obtain approval from Local, Conference & Denomination Leadership

# Educational Requirements

## for Ordained Ministers

- **Completed Degree at:**
  - **Seminary**
  - **Bible College**
  - **College with Bible, Religion, or Ministry programs**
- **or**
- **Completion of the *Directed Study Program***



# The Directed Study Program

## An Alternative to Seminary Education

The *Directed Study Program* (DSP) offers a variety of courses on Bible, history, ministry, and theological topics. For those who lack a completed Seminary or Bible College degree, the DSP meets the *minimum educational requirement* for ordination in the Brethren in Christ U.S.

The DSP includes **11 required courses** and **1 elective course**. Courses are taught at a post-high school level and require approximately 5-8 hours of work per week during the 14-week term

**More Information:** [bicus.org/training/directed-study-program](https://bicus.org/training/directed-study-program)

# The Directed Study Program

## Required & Elective Courses

### Required Courses (complete all)

- [B101r] Bible Survey
- [B103r] Biblical Interpretation
- [B201r] Pentateuch
- [B203r] Synoptic Gospels
- [H101r] History of Christianity
- [M100r] A Study of BIC Core Values
- [M102r] Evangelism
- [M103r] Intentional Discipleship
- [M106r] World Christian Movement
- [M202r] Pastoral Care & Counseling
- [T101r] Basic Christian Doctrines

### Elective Courses (choose one)

- [B203] Paul & His Letters
- [H302] Life & Thought of John Wesley
- [M105] Discerning God's Call, My Identity
- [M131] Congregational Care of Older Adults
- [M306] Spiritual Formation
- [T102] Life in the Holy Spirit

# Questions?

People who can help with your credentialing journey

**Matthew Peterson**

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<https://bicus.org/training/credentialing>



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