

Ministry Credentialing with the Brethren in Christ U.S.

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 fulfil that call.

A licensed or ordained minister is a person who has been recognized by the Church as having met the requirements for serving as an assigned minister in a ministry position within BIC U.S. or serving as an assigned minister in a ministry position recognized by BIC U.S. This credentialing includes the following steps:

- **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. Please see section 1 below for more information.
- **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. Please see section 2 below for more information.
- **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. Please see section 3 below for more information.
- **Retired Ministers.** A retired minister is a person who retired at age 62 or older and held an assigned ministry position in the 10 years immediately before retirement. A retired minister is no longer subject to the six-year renewal of ministerial credentials. Please see section 4 below for more information.

More information about the Credentialing process can be found at:

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

*The following pages contain a *Ministerial Credentialing Checklist* (page 2) and *Core Courses Checklist* (page 3).

Ministerial Credentialing Checklist

Three Year Provisional License (valid for 3 years)

A three-year provisional license is issued to persons who have completed the ministry application and screening process and who have been assigned to a ministry position recognized by the BIC U.S. A provisional license is valid for three years and *cannot* be renewed.

Requirements	Completion Date
Contact the Regional Conference Bishop (Bishop Lynn Thrush)	
<i>This I Believe</i> Questionnaire	
<i>Personal Profile</i>	
Interview with the Bishop	
Assignment to Ministry Position	

Six Year Ministry License

A six-year ministry license is issued to persons who, while holding a provisional license, meet the criteria established by the Church to be issued a six-year ministry license. The six-year ministry license is renewable based on your on-going ministry assignment, theological compatibility with the BIC U.S., exemplary living, commitment to the church, and fulfillment of lifelong BIC learning expectations.

Requirement	Completion Date
Continued Service in Assigned Ministry Position	
<i>Doctrinal Questionnaire</i> (during the <i>first year</i>)	
<i>Doctrinal Questionnaire Interview</i>	
Completion of first <i>Core Course</i> (during the <i>first year</i>)	
Completion of second <i>Core Course</i> (before license expiration)	

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 the BIC U.S.

Requirement	Completion Date
Degree from Seminary, Bible College or College with Bible, Religion, or Christian Ministries Major or the <i>Directed Study Program</i>	
Completion of all four <i>Core Courses</i>	
BIC U.S. Leadership Orientation	
Approval of the Local Congregation	
Approval by the Regional Bishop	
Approval by the Commission on Ministry and Doctrine & Leadership Council of the BIC U.S.	

Core Courses Checklist

The *Core Courses* are designed to provide an orientation towards *Brethren in Christ* history, theology, and polity for those serving in or exploring ministry roles within the denomination. Those seeking full credentialing within the BIC U.S. are expected to complete all four Core Courses for *Ordination*, with at least two completed to receive a *Six Year Ministry License*.

Core Courses are made available at select times during the year in both in-person and digital formats. More information about these courses can be found at <https://bicus.org/training/core-courses>

Brethren in Christ 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 and 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.

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.

Core Course	Completion Date
BIC History & Values	
Leadership and Structure within the BIC U.S.	
Theology of the Church	
Theology of Salvation	