

## Northwestern Illinois District Preparing For Ministry Handbook

Dear Partner in Ministry:

We of the Northwestern Illinois District are honored that you have chosen to identify with us in ministry. Whether you are a member of long standing in one of the churches of this district, or have come to us by transfer, we appreciate the opportunity to work together in Christ's Kingdom.

The District Board of Ministry is genuinely interested in assisting you in your preparation for ministry and the fulfillment of God's call on your life. We trust that you will come to regard these board members as partners with you in ministry.

We want to encourage you to accept the charge given by the Apostle Paul to young Timothy many years ago:

*“Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction . . . Keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.”*  
*II Timothy 4:2-5, NIV*

May grace, mercy and peace from the one who has called you – even the Lord Jesus – rest upon you continually.

Your brother in ministry,

Crawford M. Howe  
District Superintendent

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*All Manual references are found in the  
MANUAL 2005-2009 Church of the Nazarene*

*Revised June 2007*

***So, you are fulfilling your call!***

What an exciting moment this is for you if. . .

- . . . you are enrolling in the Course of Study (COS)
- . . . this is your first interview with the Board of Ministry, hereinafter referred to as BOM.
- . . . this is one in a series of interviews with the BOM.
- . . . you are concerned about the questions you will be expected to answer.
- . . . you are transferring to the Northwestern Illinois District, and anticipate a different approach from that in your former District.
- . . . you desire recognition from another denomination, and are certain the “why?” and “what?” questions will be yours to answer.

The BOM, one of the most important Boards on the District, has prepared this *HANDBOOK* to assist candidates in the journey toward ordination. *No person should assume that ordination will be granted.* Understandably, the successful completion of the Course of Study and the fulfillment of the required ministerial service (*Manual* 429.3) are milestones on the journey of candidacy toward ordination.

Additionally, the BOM will give consideration to a call of ministry in one’s life, to a demonstration of the gifts and graces necessary for ministry, and to an evidence of the qualities and sensitivities necessary for authentic ministry in the *Church of the Nazarene Sourcebook for Ordination* (*SO*, 439.6).

“We believe that God has designed the ordination process to protect both the church and the individual from the deep pain of unqualified ministerial leadership.” (*SO*, 439.7)

When it is generally believed that a person will not have an active/assigned ministry role on the Northwestern Illinois District in the next assembly year, ordination will not be recommended by the BOM.

In the rush of business, you may feel the BOM has pushed you along or has not been sensitive to your call, progress and ministry. Be assured:

- The BOM cares about you.
- The BOM considers its assignment a sacred trust.
- The BOM believes the ministry is a calling, not an occupation.
- The BOM desires each candidate to achieve ordination without unnecessary delay.

One of the highest moments of each interview is when a member of the BOM prays for the candidate.

We believe there is no higher calling, no work of greater importance than the Christian Ministry.

We are glad you are meeting with us. We are honored that you want to be associated with us in the work of the Ministry.

## **The Board of Ministry**

The BOM was created under provisions of *Manual*, paragraph 203.15, for the purpose of enabling a better communication between the Board of Ministerial Studies and the Board of Ministerial Credentials, and for a coordination of the work of these two Boards. The BOM assumes responsibility for all duties given the Board of Ministerial Credentials and the Board of Ministerial Studies. All *Manual* references which apply to either of these two Boards will apply to the BOM.

The BOM operates under *Manual* guidelines as found in paragraphs 226-231.4. Additionally, the Ministerial Studies is governed by guidelines issued by the Office of Clergy Services.

The BOM examines candidates relative to their Christian experience, understanding of Christian doctrine, call to the ministry, and ethical standards and practices, plus progress in educational preparation. It is the desire of the BOM to assist, encourage, and enable each candidate to develop to his/her full potential as a Minister in the Church of the Nazarene. The BOM is hopeful each candidate will succeed as a Minister. Candidates should not consider the BOM as an adversary, but as a friend and guide.

The sacred office of the ministry, and the doctrine and practice of the Church of the Nazarene are areas where the BOM adheres to strict conformity. Candidates should not expect any relaxation in these areas. In other areas of the interview where concern or admonition is expressed, candidates should realize that the BOM is composed of mature elders who are vitally concerned both with the candidate and the ministry of the Church of the Nazarene. Members of the BOM consider their service both an obligation and an honor.

You will always be treated with respect, consideration, understanding, and confidentiality. The BOM expects candidates to express concerns, doubts or questions. In the free interchange of ideas mutual respect can be cultivated both by the BOM and the Candidate.

## **District Educational Requirements**

Meeting the educational requirements for ordination may be accomplished by one of two methods.

1. There are COSAC validated degree programs offered by Nazarene colleges/universities/seminaries. With completion of the degree, ordination educational requirements are met. They are available through on campus experience or online. We encourage all students accepting the call to ministry to first consider this option as the best way to prepare for ministry.
2. The non-degree Modular Course of Study offered by Nazarene colleges/universities or through the NWIL School of Ministry is also a COSAC validated venue for ministerial preparation. This is an excellent option in preparing for ministry when age, personal family commitments or cost are issues. Additionally the MCOS is an excellent choice when degrees are already bestowed upon the individual and only certain classes are needed to complete educational requirements for ordination after transcript evaluation.

Advisors are available upon request to students enrolled in the Course of Study. Our colleges/universities offer their own advisors to help you take the appropriate courses to complete the COS for ordination if you are taking classes with their institution. Other BOM members, although meeting only once a year with candidates, are willing to offer advice and counsel whenever needed.

All students should familiarize themselves with the denominational ministerial education website: <http://nazarenepastor.org/ClergyEducation/ClergyEduc/tabid/36/Default.aspx> and the district website:

<http://www.nwilnazdistrict.org/index.cfm/method/content.Districtministerialstudents> . The district website contains resource links to the denominational website and will inform and provide the student with necessary BOM requirements. These sites contain resources to be accessed and downloaded for different aspects of ministerial preparation. The *NWIL District Preparing For Ministry Handbook*, The denominational *Handbook for Christian Ministry* and *Sourcebook for Ordination* should be downloaded and read by each candidate preparing for ministry.

### ***Regulations for College/University Students***

1. Students should request their pastor enroll them in the course of study with the Ministerial Studies Secretary of the BOM.
- 2 Students are responsible to submit to the Ministerial Studies Secretary documentary evidence of academic standing in harmony with Manual, 427.1, 427.4 and the SO, 439.26-439.30.
3. College/University Students are reminded to plan their curriculum in harmony with Manual 424.1 and 424.3.
4. Yearly updates should be submitted to the Studies Secretary of the BOM by the student, showing completed course work no later than June 30, to be credited that year.
5. The final transcript at graduation will be evaluated by the BOM to ensure a validated course of study. Requirements stated in the current Manual will not be waived.
6. Candidates should be prepared to appear for an interview as called upon by the BOM at the time and place specified . If travel is an issue for applicants living off-district, then special consideration can be arranged by the BOM acting chairman.

***Regulations for the Modular Course of Study Program*** (hereafter MCOS) are as follows. These guidelines apply for those preparing for ministry using the complete MCOS or those needing certain classes to complete educational requirements.

1. Persons who desire to prepare for ordination by means of the MCOS shall apply using the form submitted by their pastor to the Studies Secretary of the BOM.

A. “The chairperson and the secretary of the District Ministerial Studies Board are authorized to enroll a student in a validated course of study for ministerial education, in consultation with the district superintendent.” Manual. 231.1 (230.1-30.2, 424.1-24.3).  
—Nazarene Manual 2005-2009

2. Each candidate is instructed to download and read the *SO* from the District website or Clergy Education page on the Church of the Nazarene website at <http://nazarenepastor.org/clergyeducation/default.aspx?tabid=56> (select Sourcebook in the *More About God’s Call* section) in order that he/she may become familiar with the details of the entire program.

3. Each student in the MCOS needs to select their method of study. Classes may be taken on line through several of our colleges or universities or the District School of Ministry offered classes (see <http://www.nwilnazdistrict.org/index.cfm/method/content.Districtministerialstudents> for possibilities.

3. Transcripts from previously taken course work at colleges/universities/seminaries should be forwarded to the Studies Secretary for transcript evaluation. The secretary will inform the student of all modules that have been completed through transcript credit.

5. Students should consult the recommended order of modules found on either website previously mentioned to plan their classes, or work with (The Ministerial Studies Secretary) to ensure a smooth educational experience.

6. When taking District School of Ministry offered classes, course guides may be downloaded via either of the previous mentioned links. Students should enroll with the District School of Ministry Registrar.

A. All class work should be completed and credited by June 30<sup>th</sup> in order to apply on the current assembly year.

B. Work filed thereafter will apply on the following year.

7. Each candidate is to complete a minimum of two courses per year. If this minimum requirement is not met, the candidate will be considered inactive. If a candidate remains inactive for two consecutive years, he/she will be dropped from the course of study.

8. If a candidate is dropped from the course of study and desires to be re-enrolled, the BOM will grant credit for work completed only after review of the candidate’s record.

9 Course work for ordination must be completed within 10 years of the first granting of the district license. Manual, 427.4

10. Candidates should be prepared to appear for interview as called upon by the BOM at the time and place specified.

## **The Interview**

Candidates should review the *Handbook on Ministerial Studies* and the *Sourcebook for Ordination*.

Candidate should read paragraphs 400-435.8 of the *Manual of the Church of the Nazarene*.

### ***Prior to Interview***

Prior to your interview with the BOM , you will be expected to:

1. Have held a Local License for at least one full year if you are applying for an initial District License.
2. Have passed the complete first-year course of study for ministers, or have passed the *Manual* course and five additional courses in an approved course of study for ministers, or if enrolled in a Nazarene college/university or seminary, have completed one-fourth of the units prescribed in the college/university or college/university- seminary program. (*Manual*, 427.1(2))
3. Where applicable, submit the yearly report form sent from the Office of the District Secretary- All questions should be answered in detail.
4. Complete the district minister's license application and questionnaire. This is available for download from the district website, or from the District Secretary if requested, Return it to the District Secretary.
5. Request that your local church (or the District Advisory Board, if you are serving as the pastor) recommend you for a license using the District License Recommendation Form. This form is available as mentioned in #4 above.
6. Send all transcripts from colleges and seminaries to the Studies Secretary of the BOM for evaluation and noting of progress in ministerial preparation.
7. All divorced persons will meet with the District Superintendent before their first meeting with the BOM. The appropriate documentation of the divorce will be presented and discussed.

### ***Focus of the Interview***

Generally the interview will focus on the candidate's:

- Christian experience.
- Call to the ministry.
- Gifts and graces for effective ministry.

It is assumed that the candidate will meet with the BOM a minimum of *four times* prior to ordination. Each meeting will center on a specific aspect of the ministry and the minister's

qualifications. The four areas of concern to be covered, one each year, are:

- Call / Concepts / Goals for Ministry.
- Theological / Biblical / Ethical Concerns.
- Devotional Life / Family Life.
- Churchmanship / Sermonic.

Each year the candidate will be expected to give the BOM an update on his/her Christian experience and progress toward ordination.

Any interview is a cause for anxiety. Please remember that one purpose of the interview is encouragement. If a specific question cannot be answered, the candidate is urged to express his/her lack of understanding.

Candidates should feel at liberty to express doubts, fears, or to pose questions to the BOM about specific areas of ministry.

The BOM believes that each candidate should be interviewed yearly. Exceptions to this policy are rarely made. If you have enrolled as a candidate, and are living/serving on another district, bring to the BOM a letter of recommendation from the Pastor of the church you attend.

### **Procedures**

The BOM will inform students via the District website and in the Voice of the meeting place, date and time. An interview time will be e-mailed (or mailed when applicable) to each applicant approximately two weeks prior to the meeting. Please make every effort to be present at the designated time. Only those persons who apply for ordination and/or the renewal of the district license and those persons applying for a first license will be scheduled for an interview with the BOM."

Unless the Studies Secretary of the BOM verifies your progress in the Course of Study, the BOM cannot recommend you for license, commission or ordination.

Candidates transferring to the Northwestern Illinois District are expected to request a transfer and transcript in the Course of Study from their home district. Again, transcripts from educational institutions that the candidate has attended should be in the office of the Studies Secretary of the BOM prior to the meeting.

The BOM on the Northwestern Illinois District is elected by the District Assembly. Its workload necessitates that sub-committees interview the candidates. Usually, the sub-committee is composed of three to five elders that make recommendations regarding each candidate to the BOM for approval, rejection, or additional assignment.

If the BOM recommends that a license be received, granted, or renewed, the report will be presented to the District Assembly. Upon a favorable vote of the District Assembly, you will receive your license from the District Secretary. Our tradition is for the District license to be

presented publicly during the preliminaries of the Ordination service, so the attendance of all persons receiving District license is expected for two reasons:

- This serves to heighten the importance/value of the District license.
- And it is a courtesy to the current ordinands; one day you will be an ordinand and appreciate others being present.