

CREDENTIAL HANDBOOK

READ THIS BEFORE FILLING OUT THE APPLICATION



**Minnesota District Council
Assemblies of God**

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Revised 2019

2020 CREDENTIAL CALENDAR TIMETABLE AND INSTRUCTIONS

FIRST APPLICATION DEADLINE - October 1, 2019 (For current NCU students, deadline is Nov. 1st)

The following items must be **in our office** on or before the above-mentioned date:

New Applicants

- a. Official Application with photo
- b. School Transcript(s)
- c. Authorization & Release Forms
- d. Photocopy of Social Security Card
- e. Background Check Disclosure Form
- f. Supplemental App & Spouse Info Form
- g. Waiver and Disclaimer Forms
- h. Proctor Form (if applicable)
- i. Fee: Certified Minister -- \$165
Licensed Minister -- \$165

Upgrade Applicants

- a. Upgrade Application with photo
- b. School Transcript(s)
- c. Authorization & Release Forms
- d. Photocopy of Social Security Card
- e. Background Check Disclosure Form
- f. Proctor Form (if applicable)
- g. Fee: Licensed Minister -- \$100
Ordained Minister -- \$165

When your Application, Background Check Disclosure Form and Fee are received in our office, a background check/credit report will be run. Upon satisfactory results, Reference forms can be downloaded from the website at
(www.mnaog.org/Resources/CredentialingInfo.aspx)

FINAL APPLICATION DEADLINE - November 1, 2019

The following items must be **in our office** on or before the above-mentioned date:

New Applicants

Written Exam & References

Upgrade Applicants

Written Exam & References

Guidelines for taking the exam

The exam is taken under the supervision of a designated, approved proctor. Once we receive the form in our office, the exam will be mailed to the proctor. Study guides are available and will be provided to you once your background/credit check has been done. The exam needs to be taken and returned to our office by November 1st. The exam will be offered at the District Office between 8am & 2pm on **Friday, November 1st and Monday, November 4th**.

Seminar and Interview

Applicants who have been approved will be notified of the time of their interview appointment.
Spouses or fiancés are required to attend the seminar and interview.

Certified and Licensed Applicants

Wednesday & Thursday, February 19-20, 2020

Two-day event | Interviews Thurs afternoon

Ordained Applicants

Tuesday, February 18, 2020

All-day event/Interviews

Credentialing | Ordination Service

The Service takes place during District Council which is scheduled for April 23-24, 2020. The Credentialing/Ordination Service will be on **Friday, April 24 @ 10am at Cedar Valley Church.**

All Applications & Forms can be downloaded at
www.mnaog.org/Resources/CredentialingInfo.aspx
More details can be found in the Credential Handbook on our website.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Instructions to Candidates	1
16 Fundamental Truths of AG	1-2
Baptism in the Holy Spirit.....	2
Legal Residency Requirement.....	2
Church Membership Requirement	2
Abstinence Standard	3
Abstinence from Pornography Requirement	3
Making Application if Divorced.....	3
Application/Filing Fees.....	3
Fast Track Program	4
Basic Qualifications for Recognition.....	4-6
Specific Qualifications.....	6-7
Educational Requirements.....	7-9
Making Application.....	10-11
Application Deadline	12
Minister's Tithe Responsibility.....	13

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

This handbook has been prepared to give helpful information to those who have a call to ministry and may be seeking ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God Fellowship through the Minnesota District Council.

All candidates should acquaint themselves with the teachings, practices, and purposes of the fellowship as revealed through the Constitution & Bylaws of the General Council of the Assemblies of God. The General Council Constitution & Bylaws can be found at this website: http://ag.org/top/About/constitution_bylaws.cfm.

All applications for ministerial credentials are to be made through the Minnesota District Council. See pages 4-6 for **Basic Qualifications**, pages 6-7 for **Specific Qualifications**, and pages 9-11 regarding **Making Application**.

Ministerial credentials are for those who show a genuine call of God to ministry which would take them beyond the confines of their own local church. **Ministerial credentials are not for lay people engaged in teaching, worship leading, or occasional exhortation in the local assembly.** It is the responsibility of the Credentials Committee to carefully screen all candidates to determine whether their ministry would be best served as lay ministry or if the candidate should be credentialed for full-time ministry.

16 FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD

All candidates seeking credentials with the Assemblies of God must be in agreement with the 16 tenants of faith. These are non-negotiable. If a candidate finds they are in disagreement with any of the following fundamental truths, they should discuss their concerns with the District Secretary before actually making application. Applicants not agreeing with the 16 fundamental truths will not receive credentials.

WE BELIEVE:

1. **The Scriptures are Verbally Inspired by God** *2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Thess 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21*
2. **One True God...Father, Son & Holy Spirit** *Deut 6:4; Isaiah 43:10,11; Matthew 28:19, Luke 3:22*
3. **The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ** *Matt 1:23; Luke 1:31,35; Hebrews 7:26; 1 Peter 2:22; Acts 2:22, 10:38; 1Corin 15:3; 2Corin 5:21, Matt 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1Corin 15:4, Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11, Hebrews 1:3*
4. **The Fall Of Man** *Genesis 1:26,27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19*
5. **The Salvation of Man** *Luke 24:27; John 3:3; Romans 10:13-15; Eph 2:8; 4:24; Titus 2:11; 2:12; 3:5-7; Romans 8:16*
6. **The Ordinances of the Church- Baptism in Water & Holy Communion** *Matt 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47, 48; Romans 6:4; 2Peter 1:4; 1Corin 11:26*
7. **The Baptism in the Holy Spirit - the promise of the Father** *Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8; 2:42, 43; 4:8; 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 15:7-9; 1Corin 12:1-31; John 7:37-39; Hebrews 12:28; Mark 16:20*

8. **The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit – speaking with other tongues** Acts 2:4; 1Corin 12:4-10, 28
9. **Sanctification Initially Occurs at Salvation** Romans 6:1-11,13; 8:1,2,13; 12:1,2; 1Thess 5:23; Hebrews 13:12, 12:14; 1Peter 1:5; 1:15,16; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2:12,13
10. **The Church and Its Mission – body of Christ & its fourfold missions** Eph 1:22,23; 2:22; 4:11-16; Hebrews 12:23; Acts 1:8; Matt 28:19,20; Mark 16:15,16; 1Corin 12:13; 12:28; 14:12
11. **The Ministry – provided by our Lord for the fourfold purpose of leading the Church** Mark 16:15-20; John 4:23,24; Eph 4:11,16; Gal 2:10; James 1:27
12. **Divine Healing - provided for in the Atonement** Isaiah 53:4,5; Matt 8:16,17; James 5:14-16
13. **The Blessed Hope—The Rapture** 1Thess 4:16,17, Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; 1Corin 15:51,52
14. **The Millennial Reign of Christ** Zech 14:5; Matt 24:27,30; Rev 1:7; 19:11-14; 20:1-6; Ezekiel 37:21,22; Zeph 3:19,20; Romans 11:26,27; Isaiah 11:6-9; Psalm 72:3-8; Micha 4:3,4
15. **The Final Judgment** Matt 25:46; Mark 9:43-48; Rev 19:30, 20:11-15; 21:8
16. **New Heavens and a New Earth** 2Peter 3:13; Rev 21,22

BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

A person seeking to be credentialed with the Assemblies of God **must have received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in tongues**. We believe this is not a one-time experience, but rather, this should be an ongoing experience and a regular part of a minister's devotional life. The candidate must believe and proclaim that the initial physical evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues.

LEGAL RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT

It is a requirement that an applicant for credentials who is not a citizen of the United States of America have proof of a legal working status in the United States. Foreign students temporarily in the United States for educational purposes are not eligible for credentials. It will be necessary for the non-citizen applicant to provide either a copy of their green card or a lawful nonimmigrant temporary work visa before an application will be processed.

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT

It is a requirement that an applicant for credentials be a member of an Assemblies of God church. An exception to this requirement would be for a minister who is credentialed with another organization who wishes to be affiliated with the Assemblies of God or someone attending a Home Missions church not offering membership. The candidate must contact the District Secretary for exceptions.

ABSTINENCE STANDARD

The Assemblies of God believes that for the sake of adhering to the highest ministerial standards, a minister will abstain from alcohol, tobacco or other smoking, gambling, pornography, recreational or illegal drug usage or any sinful behaviors specifically prohibited by Scripture. Any person applying for credentials would need to agree to this standard.

ABSTINENCE FROM PORNOGRAPHY REQUIREMENT

An applicant for credentials needs to be free of any use of pornography for **at least 2 years prior** to applying for credentials. Those struggling in this area should contact the District Secretary.

MAKING APPLICATION IF DIVORCED

If an applicant for credentials has been divorced and remarried and their former spouse is still living **OR** if their spouse has been divorced and has a former spouse still living, the divorce would need to be recognized by the General Council Executive Presbyters before an application for credentials could be processed. Please call the Credential Office to request an Application for Recognition of Divorce.

APPLICATION/FILING FEES (Nonrefundable*)

Certificate of Ministry License [initial application] Ordination	\$165
License Upgrade	\$100
Husband/Wife Discount**	\$20
Minister's Spouse [not Fast Track]	\$105
Fast Track [see pg 6]	\$75
Late Fee [see pg 12]	\$100

* Nonrefundable if applicant withdraws, but partially refundable if withdrawal is at the District's request. District will retain \$50 minimum.

** Deduction for second applicant if both husband and wife are applying.

FAST TRACK PROGRAM

The General Presbyters approved a fast-track program for the following candidates:

1. Lead pastors who want to bring their existing churches into the Assemblies of God
2. Staff pastors of those same churches who currently hold credentials with other organizations
3. Groups of existing ethnic ministers who wish to affiliate with the General Council of the Assemblies of God
4. Minister's spouse who is ministry-active and has been married to a minister who has been ordained for a minimum of 10 years

Requirements:

1. A completed *Official Application for Ministerial Credentials*
2. A letter of recommendation from Assemblies of God Ordained Ministers.
3. Study of the condensed manual on *Assemblies of God History, Missions & Governance*
4. Completion of the course *Spirit Empowered Churches*
5. Background check
6. Signed Authorization / Release forms
7. Interview with District Executives or their designee
8. Ordained level ministers are to have the laying on of hands by the District Executives, perhaps at the set-in-order meeting of a church coming into the fellowship

In all cases, the candidates must be persons who are Pentecostal in experience, agree with the Statement of Fundamental Truths, and are willing to embrace 'voluntary cooperation' with the Assemblies of God in all of its implications.

BASIC QUALIFICATIONS FOR RECOGNITION

(Quoted from the General Council and District Council Bylaws)

The following qualifications pertain to applicants for ministerial recognition:

- 1) **Salvation and Baptism.** Testimony to having experienced the new birth [John 3:5] and to having been baptized in water [Matt. 28:19].
- 2) **Baptism in the Holy Spirit.** Testimony to having received the baptism in the Holy Spirit with the initial physical evidence of speaking in other tongues according to Acts 2:4. The Spirit-filled life will enable him to fulfill the threefold mission of the church.
- 3) **Evidence of Call.** Clear evidence of a divine call to the ministry, evidenced by a personal conviction, confirmed by the work of the Spirit and the testimony of fellow ministers.
- 4) **Christian Character.** A blameless Christian life and a good report of those who are without [Titus 1:7; I Timothy 3:7].

- 5) **Doctrinal Position.** A thorough understanding of and agreement with our doctrinal position as contained in the Statement of Fundamental Truths.
- 6) **Assemblies of God Polity.** A satisfactory working knowledge of the principles, practices, and purposes of the Fellowship through a study of the General Council and Minnesota District Council Constitution and Bylaws.
- 7) **Commitment to the Fellowship.** An active loyalty to our constitutional agreements, a cooperative spirit, and a readiness to seek and receive the counsel of those who are spiritually mature and those in positions of authority [Proverbs 11:14].
- 8) **Assemblies of God Membership.** A member in good standing with an Assemblies of God Church.
- 9) **Basic Educational Requirements.** Any level of formal academic achievement [diploma or degree] shall not be a requirement for credentials; however, credential applicants shall meet the following criteria:

All applicants are required to be interviewed by the Minnesota District Credentials Committee and in preparation for the interview, pass a standard exam approved by the General Presbytery whereby they demonstrate knowledge of the Bible, Assemblies of God doctrines, and ministerial practices; and either

- 1) Successfully complete courses prescribed by the General Presbytery offered in correspondence through the Berean College of the Assemblies of God; or
 - 2) Successfully complete equivalent training to that indicated above, preferably in an endorsed Assemblies of God post-secondary school; or in a seminary, college, Bible college, or school approved by the Minnesota District Credentials Committee consistent with criteria established by the General Council Credentials Committee; or
 - 3) Be recommended by the Minnesota District Credentials Committee as qualifying for credentials through self-study and ministerial experience. Such candidates shall have a proven and fruitful ministry of substantial duration. Requests from the Minnesota District for such a candidate shall be presented to the General Council Credentials Committee and may be granted on a case-by-case basis.
- 10) **Mandatory Screening.** All applicants for ministerial credentials shall be screened through a designated screening agency established by the General Council Executive Presbytery. The screening shall be done prior to the submission of the application to the office of the General Secretary.
 - 11) **Marriage Status.** The General Council disapproves of any married persons holding ministerial credentials with the Assemblies of God if either marriage partner has a former spouse living, unless the divorce occurred prior to his or her conversion or for the scriptural causes of a former spouse's marital unfaithfulness [Matthew 19:9], or the abandonment of the believer by the unbeliever [I Corinthians 7:10-15], except as hereinafter provided.
 - 12) **Recognition of an Approved Divorce.** The General Council Executive Presbytery has the authority to determine whether an applicant qualifies for an ecclesiastical annulment, pre-conversion divorce or if there was spousal infidelity and abandonment.

- 13) **Eligibility of women:** The scriptures plainly teach that divinely called and qualified women may also serve the church in the ministry of the Word [Joel 2:29; Acts 21.9; I Corinthians 11:5]. Women who have developed in the ministry of the Word so that their ministry is acceptable generally and who have proven their qualifications in actual service and who have met all the requirements of the credentials committees of the district councils are entitled to whatever grade of credentials their qualifications warrant and the right to administer the ordinances of the church when such acts are necessary.
- 14) **Ministers from Other Organizations.** If a minister from another recognized body desires to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, the Credentials Committees of both the General Council and the Minnesota District Council are under no obligation to accept the applicant's previous ministerial status but will judge each candidate on his or her own merits as to the level of credentials to be granted. Such applicants shall be required to:
- a) Conform to Assemblies of God criteria for recognition.
 - b) Complete an application for ministerial recognition.
 - c) Submit a letter of recommendation from a neighboring Assemblies of God minister or sectional presbyter for the applicant's area.
 - d) Submit a recommendation from the body with which the minister was formerly affiliated. If such is not available, letters of recommendation should be sought from three reputable ordained ministers who are familiar with the applicant's ministry, two of whom should be from the applicant's former credentialing body.
 - e) Take the credential examination.
 - f) Complete such courses as may be prescribed by the General Presbytery for ministers coming from other credentialing bodies.
 - g) Meet with the District Credentials Committee for an oral interview.
 - h) Be recommended by the District Credentials Committee for approval of the General Council Credentials Committee.
 - i) All previously ordained ministers so approved shall receive public recognition as ordained Assemblies of God ministers with laying on of hands by the District Presbytery at the next annual District Council. All other applicants so approved shall receive the appropriate level of credential recognition.
 - j) Ministers who receive Assemblies of God recognition will relinquish their ministerial credentials with any other organization.

SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS

- 1) **Residency requirements of applicants.** Applicants for all credentials must be residents of or hold credentials in the Minnesota District and appear before its credentials committee.
- 2) ***Certified Minister***

General Requirements. They shall show promise of usefulness in the gospel work. They shall devote full or part-time to Christian ministry and, at the discretion of the Minnesota District Credentials Committee, remain under the supervision of a pastor or a ministry coach or mentor. They shall show evidence of a divine call and be actively engaged in some aspect of ministry and proclamation of the gospel, except in case of ill health or advanced age.

3) ***Licensed Minister***

Qualifications for License shall include clear evidence of a divine call, character, and preparation suitable for that calling, practical ministry experience, and an evident purpose to devote one's life in service to the proclamation of the gospel.

4) ***Ordained Minister***

Qualifications for Ordination are outlined in the New Testament Scriptures [I Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9].

In addition:

- a) Applicants must be 23 years of age or older.
- b) They must have met all the requirements in making application and in completing the prescribed application form.
- c) One must show evidence of a divine call and has held a ministry license and has been actively engaged in ministry for at least 2 full consecutive years immediately prior thereto.
- d) *Residency Requirements of Applicants.* Applicants must be residents of or hold credentials in the Minnesota District and appear before its Credentials Committee. The Minnesota District Council is required to refrain from approving any applicant for ordination who may have been licensed in another district until such licensed minister shall have been a member of the Minnesota District for at least 1 year. If the applicant has not been a member of the Minnesota District for 2 full consecutive years, he must meet the requirements and secure the endorsement of the Officiary of the district in which he was previously licensed, as well as the Minnesota District.

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

For applicants who have attended an endorsed Assemblies of God college with a ministry major, (or at least 24 credit hours of Bible/Theo classes) credit will be given as follows for those who have completed:

♦ **2 yrs [48 hrs] Certificate of Ministry** ♦ **3 yrs [72 hrs] License** ♦ **4 yrs [96 hrs] Ordination**

For applicants who have not had formal Bible/ministry training, the General Council Presbytery has adopted the **Berean School of the Bible** Ministerial Studies Diploma courses as the minimum standard for credentials for applicants.

The following Class Comparison Chart shows the approved classes to be taken through MNSOM (Minnesota School of Ministry) and Global University.

Berean & MNSOM Transfer Guidelines

MNSOM Course	Berean Course
Certified (Level 1) Courses	
112 Life of Christ	BIB114 Christ in the Synoptic Gospels
113 Acts	BIB115 Acts: The Holy Spirit at Work in Believers
114 Ephesians or 115 Prison Epistles	BIB117 Prison Epistles: Colossians, Philemon, Ephesians, & Philippians
121 Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine	THE114 Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine
122 AG History, Missions, & Governance	THE142 AG History, Missions, & Governance
133 Local Church Evangelism	MIN123 The Local Church in Evangelism
134 Ministerial Ethics (District Required)	
136 Hermeneutics I (or 131 Introduction to Hermeneutics)	BIB121 Introduction to Hermeneutics: How to Interpret the Bible
137 Hermeneutics II (Or 131 Introduction to Hermeneutics)	
138 Spirit Empowered Churches	MIN171 A Spirit-Empowered Church: an Acts 2 Ministry Model
150 Certified Internship	MIN191 Beginning Ministerial Internship
Licensed (Level 2) Courses	
211 Old Testament Survey	BIB214 Old Testament Survey
212 New Testament Survey	BIB212 New Testament Survey
213 Romans	BIB215 Romans: Justification by Faith
223 Eschatology	THE245 Eschatology: A Study of Things to Come
230 Systematic Theology	THE211 Introduction to Theology: A Pentecostal Perspective
231 Introduction to Homiletics	MIN223 Introduction to Homiletics
232 Leadership Skills	MIN251 Effective Leadership
233 Conflict Resolution (District Required)	
234 Introduction to Missions	MIN261 Introduction to AG Missions
250 Licensed Internship	MIN291 Intermediate Ministerial Internship
Ordained (Level 3) Courses	
311 Pentateuch	BIB318 Pentateuch
312 Psalms	BIB322 Poetic Books
314 Corinthians	BIB313 Corinthian Correspondence
322 Theology of Prayer	THE311 Prayer and Worship
324 Theology of Worship	
331 Multicultural Ministry	MIN325 Preaching in the Contemporary World
332 Pastoral Ministry (District Required)	
334 Church Administration, Law, & Finance	MIN327 Church Administration, Finance, and Law
350 Ordained Internship	MIN391 Advanced Ministerial Internship
***District Required Courses must be taken through MNSOM	

MNSOM – MINNESOTA SCHOOL OF MINISTRY

MNSOM is a non-accredited Bible Training Institute located at various locations in the state. Courses taken through the MNSOM will meet educational requirements for credentials with the General Council of the Assemblies of God; however, the courses may not qualify for credit at an accredited institution. There are 3 courses offered each month [one for Certified, one for License and one for Ordained]. Please see the District School of Ministry website for locations and course information: www.mnsom.org.

The **Relationships & Ethics in Ministry**, **Conflict Management for Church Leaders**, and **Pastoral Ministry** courses listed on the Berean list of courses will need to be substituted with the MNSOM courses: Ministerial Ethics, Conflict Resolution, and Pastoral Ministry. These courses may only be offered once a year, so check the MnsOM schedule and plan accordingly.

GLOBAL UNIVERSITY / BEREAN SCHOOL OF THE BIBLE

The Berean School of the Bible [institute level] is a branch of Global University, Springfield, Missouri. The courses may be ordered directly from them by visiting their website at www.globaluniversity.edu. If it is preferable to take the courses at the college level to receive college credit, then enrollment should be made with Global University rather than Berean. A 20% discount is available for students taking courses with Global University in order to seek credentials. Please ask the Credentials Coordinator for more information regarding the discount.

NON-MINISTRY MAJOR - AG COLLEGE GRADUATE

An applicant who has attended an endorsed Assemblies of God college/university but did not have a ministry major should request to have their transcript evaluated by the Credentials Coordinator to determine what supplemental coursework would need to be taken.

NON-AG BIBLE COLLEGE GRADUATE

Applicants who have attended a non-Assemblies of God Bible college should request that their transcript be evaluated. Applicants who attended a non-AG Bible college would be **required to take two courses: *Assemblies of God History, Missions and Governance, Spirit Empowered Churches***; and other courses may also be required, such as ***Introduction to Pentecostal Doctrine***.

MAKING APPLICATION

The cycle for completing the Credential Application paperwork is May to October of each year. No applications will be sent out or accepted after October 1st of each year except for those applying under the Fast Track Program or current NCU Students.

Step #1

- The applicant should complete the Credential Candidates Initial Questionnaire found on the website at www.mnaog.org/Resources/CredentialingInfo and email it to the link provided on the website.
- Applicant should download Application and Supporting documents from the website listed above:
 1. *Credential Handbook for Credential Applicants*
 2. *Credential Calendar/Timetable and Instructions*
 3. *Official Application for Ministerial Credentials*
 4. *Information Authorization & Release Forms*
 - a. one for applicant and
 - b. one for spouse/fiancée/fiancé, if applicable
 5. *Background Check Disclosure*
 6. *Supplemental Credential Application*
 7. *Spouse/Fiancée/Fiancé Information Form [if married or engaged]*
 8. *Disclaimer Statement/Waiver of Responsibility Form*
 - *Reading materials to go with this form*

Provided at a later date:

9. *Proctor Agreement*
 10. *Study Materials for the Test*
 - *Study Guides for Exam*
 - *General Council Constitution & Bylaws are online @ <https://ag.org/about/about-the-ag/constitution-and-bylaws>*
 - *Position Paper Packet are online @ <https://ag.org/Beliefs/Position-Papers>*
- Applicant should complete the **Official Application for Ministerial Credentials** and send it to the District Secretary's Office along with the notarized **Information Authorization & Release form(s)**, signed **Background Check Disclosure** and the appropriate **nonrefundable application/filing fee** as soon as completed so we can run the Background\Credit Report. The other forms can be mailed or emailed any time before the October 1st deadline.

Please Note Regarding References: When listing references on the back page of the application, the applicant **should not list relatives**, unless that relative is the applicant's senior pastor and they are working directly under him/her. The Minister References listed should be ordained or licensed ministers. Also, we only need one Employer's Reference.

- Applicant should include **transcript(s)** from any school, college, or university attended where ministry courses were taken, or the applicant should order the transcript(s) to be sent directly to the Minnesota District Council.
- Upon receipt of the *Official Application for Ministerial Credentials, Information Authorization & Release form(s), Background Check Disclosure*, and application/filing fee, a

background/credit check will be run on the applicant. Credit issues may affect an applicant's eligibility for credentials.

Step #2

1. Upon receipt of favorable background check reports, Reference Forms [**for the references listed on the application**] can be downloaded from the website.
- **Send out References:** Applicant should send out references right away and include a copy of the signed and notarized *Information Authorization & Release* form(s). *They can be sent and received via email but must be emailed to the Credential Coordinator directly from the Reference.*
- **Take a written exam:** All applicants must pass a written examination to be eligible.
 - The Exam is broken down into three parts: Bible Knowledge, Doctrine and Polity. Those applying for Certified will take Bible Knowledge and Doctrine. Those applying License will take all three – Bible Knowledge, Doctrine and Policy. Those upgrading from Certified to License only take Polity. There is no exam for those upgrading to Ordination.
 - Comprehensive Study Guides will be provided.
 - **A basic Bible without a concordance or other helps [hard copy—not digital]** may be used for the Doctrine and Polity parts. The General Council Constitution & Bylaws may be used for the Polity Exam.

Proctored Exam: The exam may be proctored by the applicant's pastor or other eligible person [see the *Proctor Agreement* for a list]. That individual should complete the *Proctor Agreement* and send it to the District Secretary's Office. The exam will then be sent direct to the Proctor. After completion of the test, the Proctor would forward the completed exam to the District Secretary's Office for correction and evaluation.

Exam at the District Office: The exam may also be taken at the District Office on a scheduled date for a \$10 fee. The only exception would be on the two free days scheduled in November. (Refer to Credential Calendar)

Step #3

- **Attend Credentialing Seminar:** This is a 2-day seminar for License and Certificate of Ministry candidates and a 1-day seminar for Ordination candidates. It is held in February of each year [see the *Credential Calendar* for specific dates]. **It is a requirement that all candidates and their spouse/fiancée/fiancé [where applicable] attend the Credentialing Seminar.** The only exception is for the minister's spouse who is applying under that status or those applying with the Fast Track Program. License candidates who attended the Credentialing Seminar as a Certificate of Ministry candidate will not need to attend again until they seek Ordination.

The Credentialing Seminar is taught by seasoned ministers and District officials. It covers topics that are helpful to the new minister. The spouse/fiancée/fiancé of the candidate needs to attend the Credentialing Seminar as well, since ministry is very much a "team" ministry.

- **Be Interviewed:** All credential candidates will be interviewed during the Credentialing Seminar.
 - 1) All applicants will be required to meet with the Minnesota District Credentials Committee for an interview.
 - 2) The purpose of the interview is to get acquainted, assist in areas of concern that may have been indicated on the application or on the written exam, and advise of benefits and responsibilities as a member of the Minnesota District.
 - 3) The applicant will be assigned to a Presbyter or other approved interviewer who will call their references. The interviewer will then contact the applicant to ask a few questions over the phone or meet the applicant in person.
 - 4) The applicant will be notified of the time and place for the interview. **It is required that the spouse/fiancée/fiancé [where applicable] be a part of the interview.**
 - 5) Following the interview, the Credentials Committee [the District Presbytery Board] will in turn approve or disapprove the granting of credentials.
 - 6) The District Secretary Office will notify the applicant if the decision of the District Credentials Committee is to deny or delay credentials. Should the applicant not agree with their recommendation, the applicant may appeal to the District Credentials Committee.

Step #4

- **Attend District Council:** Approved credential candidates will be recognized at the District Council which convenes in April of each year [see the *Credential Calendar* for exact date]. Attendance is required at this event for all credential candidates and their spouse/fiancée/fiancé.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

DEADLINE DATE: All application materials from Steps 1 need to be received in the District Office on or before **October 1**. Step 2 must be completed by **November 1** which includes taking the Exam. No application packets will be sent out to applicants after the October 1st date except for the Fast Track program and current NCU students.

CURRENT NCU STUDENTS: All application materials from Steps 1 and 2 must be received in the District Office by **November 1**.

IT IS THE APPLICANT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO BE SURE THEIR FILE IS COMPLETE BY THE DEADLINE DATE. IT IS NOT THE CREDENTIALING COORDINATOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO REMIND THE APPLICANT OF THIS REQUIREMENT.

LATE FEE: Applicants who have started the application process before October 1 [have sent in their initial application paperwork] but have not sent in all of their application materials may continue the application process until November 30; however, they will be required to pay a late fee of **\$100**.

EXCEPTION FOR EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS: Applicants who have not completed their coursework by October 1st will be **allowed a short extension into December to complete their educational requirements** and have their transcripts sent to the District Secretary without paying the late fee.

MINISTER'S TITHE RESPONSIBILITY

MINNESOTA DISTRICT COUNCIL:

100% of your tithe (10% of income) on **ministerial income** is to be paid to Minnesota District Council. This is a requirement for the annual renewal of ministerial credentials (District Bylaws, Article X Finances, Section A, paragraph a page 28):

- **Minimums** payable to the Minnesota District (**for all levels of credentials**) \$50 per month. *This is applicable even if you have no ministerial income; or 100% of your tithe on ministerial income, **whichever is greater**.*
- **If spouse is also credentialed** - Minimum is \$25 per month (\$300) or 100% of your tithe on ministerial income, **whichever is greater**.

We have online giving available on our website (www.mnaog.org) to help you pay your tithe to the District. We suggest you do an auto deduction.

GENERAL COUNCIL DUES:

Certified Ministers	\$ 10 per month (\$ 120)
Licensed Ministers	\$ 20 per month (\$ 240)
Ordained Ministers	\$ 25 per month (\$ 300)

The tithe due to the Minnesota District can be reduced by the amount paid to General Council **provided that at least** the minimum tithe is met to the Minnesota District.