

Your Guide to Ministry Credentials in the Allegheny District

CERTIFICATE OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

We are pleased that you are pursuing ministry credentials in the Allegheny District of the EFCA!

Credentials serve many important purposes:

- affirming God's call upon your life
- verifying that you meet the qualifications and standards for ministry in the EFCA
- approving you for ministerial service under the auspices of the EFCA
- and providing legal status in the exercise of your ministry.

This is a guide to acquiring the **EFCA Certificate of Christian Ministry**. It is intended to give you a simple road map through a process that can sometimes seem overly complicated.

The primary purpose of the Certificate of Christian Ministry (CCM) is to *affirm theological proficiency*. (This expands on the License, which focuses on theological competency and alignment with the EFCA, and is distinguished from the Certificate of Ordination (CCO), which focuses on theological mastery.) It is a permanent credential intended for leaders involved in church ministry (such as associate/assistant pastor, administrative pastor, youth pastor, minister of music, pastoral counselor, women's minister, children's minister, etc.), institutional ministry, military chaplaincy, missionary ministry and evangelistic ministry; who have demonstrated an acceptable level of preparation for ministry.

The process for acquiring the Certificate of Christian Ministry is very similar to that which you followed to receive your License.

GET STARTED!

1 *Apply for Your Certificate of Ordination.*

The first step is to gather the required application materials and send them to the District Office:

- [Minister's Profile](#). This form ensures that our information about you is up to date.
- A letter from you indicating your desire to hold the Certificate of Christian Ministry in the EFCA.
- An affidavit from you indicating that you have completed the [EFCA Required Reading](#) *or* the EFCA History and Polity course. (If a previous affidavit is on file, a second is not necessary.)

- ❑ A record of attendance from the dean's office of any Bible schools or seminaries you have attended. (If a previous letter is on file, a second letter is not necessary.)
- ❑ A letter of recommendation from the church of which you are a member and, if different, a letter from the church or ministry you are currently serving. Please forward the [Guide to Writing the Letter of Recommendation](#) to your church's leaders. [The Character Assessment Guide](#) is another helpful document that your church leaders can use to prepare your letter of recommendation.
- ❑ [Application for Certificate of Christian Ministry](#). This application includes a checklist of all items that must accompany your file before it goes to the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing. Fill the form out as much as possible. There are a few items on the checklist (4. Written Thesis, 5. Minutes of Credentialing Council, and 6. Recommendation from Credentialing Council) that will be added to your file later.

Send these application materials (as you finish them or all together) to the District Office:

EFCA Allegheny District
Attn: Kathy Dysart
239 Braun Road, Beaver Falls, PA 15010
Phone & Fax: (412) 854-5620
alleghenydistrict@verizon.net

Kathy will help you track your progress. She will also communicate to the District Constitutions and Credentials Board that your paperwork has been received.

2 Write Your Christian Ministry Thesis.

The next major step is to write your Christian Ministry Thesis, a sizeable paper that demonstrates your theological proficiency in interaction with the EFCA Statement of Faith.

- * Read the [Certificate of Christian Ministry Paper Requirements](#) carefully. They provide you with a comprehensive set of guidelines for writing your paper that must be closely adhered to.
- * This paper builds upon the paper you did for your License but is a substantial expansion. Plan significant time to pray, think, and write.
- * Set personal goals for completing this paper. We suggest that you divide the work up into achievable pieces and work at a predetermined pace. (Example: "I plan to have the biographical section done by March 1st. I want to have the section on Article 1 completed by May 1st.") We also suggest that you ask a friend to hold you accountable and to encourage you through your writing phase.

- * Peter King is the current contact person for papers and councils. [Contact Peter](#), and he will pair you with a “coach” to mentor you through the process of writing your thesis.

3 Prepare for Your Council.

As you complete your paper, you will want to schedule your Certificate of Christian Ministry Council.

- * [Contact Peter King](#). He will work with you to arrange for a council to be held.
- * In the Allegheny District, an Certificate Council will be made up of *a minimum of 5* (five) pastors and 5 (five) laymen from 5 (five) EFCA churches. Two of the pastors must be members of the district Constitutions and Credentials Board (CCB) and the other three pastors must have permanent EFCA credentials.
- * The CCB will supply a moderator and a secretary/scribe for your council. It is *your responsibility* to secure the attendance of council members. Your moderator will assist you in finding credentialed pastors to serve.
- * The approximate length of your council will be 2½-3 hours. You will be required to defend your thesis including how the doctrine affects your pastoral ministry. You will be asked questions about your life, ministry, and beliefs to demonstrate your theological proficiency.
- * To prepare, we recommend that you attend another candidate’s Certificate Council, if possible. This provides an orientation to the process, gives you a sense of what kinds of questions will be asked, and builds confidence in your ability to pass the council yourself.

? Help Is Available!

More helpful information about ministry credentials can be found on the [EFCA website](#) including [general requirements for credentials](#) and [specific requirements for the Certificate of Christian Ministry](#). The brochure [Steps Toward Credentialing](#) is the officially approved policy that governs ministry credentials within the EFCA. [An overview summary of the whole process](#) from start to finish is especially helpful for getting the big picture.

Please contact any of us on the District Constitutions and Credentials Board to answer any questions, encourage you throughout the process, or solve any problems that arise as you progress towards your permanent ministry credential.

We want you to succeed in this process and are ready to help you in whatever way we can!

Allegheny District Constitutions and Credentials Board

Rev. Matt Mitchell, Chairman

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Rev. Peter King

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(330) 527-4068

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