

# Your Guide to Ministry Credentials in the Allegheny District

## CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION TRANSFER OF ORDINATION

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 Ordination**. 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 Ordination (COO) is to *affirm theological mastery*. (This expands on the License, which focuses on theological competency and alignment with the EFCA, and is distinguished from the Certificate of Christian Ministry (CCM), which focuses on theological proficiency.) It is a permanent credential intended for men involved in pastoral ministry (seminary professors, military chaplains, and missionary church planters are also eligible) who have demonstrated an acceptable level of academic preparation for ministry (an M.Div or its equivalent).

The process for acquiring the Certificate of Ordination is very similar to that which you followed to receive your License. If you are transferring your ordination, you do not need to go through the licensing procedure, but you must have served in your current EFCA ministry for at least one year before the transfer can be completed.

### 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 be ordained 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 Ordination](#). 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 Ordination Council, and 6. Recommendation from Ordination Council) that will be added to your file later. If transferring, use the [Application for Transfer of Ordination](#) instead.

If you are transferring your ordination, please *also* include:

- A photocopy of your original ordination certificate.
- A letter of recommendation from some official or board of your previous affiliation. If there are no available addresses or persons to contact concerning the transfer of ordination, you must place your original ordination certificate in trust with the EFCA.

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](mailto: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 Ordination Thesis.***

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

- \* Read the [Certificate of Ordination Paper Requirements](#) carefully. They provide you with a comprehensive set of guidelines for writing your paper that must be closely adhered to. If you are transferring, use the [Transfer of Ordination Paper Requirements](#) instead.

- \* 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 1<sup>st</sup>. I want to have the section on Article 1 completed by May 1<sup>st</sup>.”) We also suggest that you ask a friend to hold you accountable and to encourage you through your writing phase.
- \* Matt Mitchell is the current contact person for papers and councils. [Contact Matt](#), 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 ordination paper, you will want to schedule your Ordination Council.

- \* [Contact Matt Mitchell](#). He will work with you to arrange for a Ordination Council to be held.
- \* In the Allegheny District, an Ordination 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 four 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 mastery.
- \* To prepare, we recommend that you attend another candidate’s Ordination 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 Ordination](#). 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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