

# Pastoral Ministry



*Jim Bolich*  
Director of  
Ministerial  
Licensing and  
Ordination

It has been both an honor and joy to serve as the Director of Ministerial Licensing and Ordination for the past two years. I especially appreciate the opportunity I have had to collaborate with the exceptional group of elders who serve on the Pastoral Ministry Leadership Team (PMLT). Together, we oversee the licensing and ordination process for the US National Conference and give leadership to the professional development of its ministers.

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## PMLT Regions

Licensing of ministers is shared among four regional Ministerial Licensing and Ordination Teams (MLOT). Each MLOT is tasked with the responsibility of assuring that our ministers can think critically, communicate clearly, engage biblically, and interact effectively. We depend on the MLOT to assure licentiates advancing through the process are demonstrating growth in theological development, Kingdom dynamics (spiritually alive; relationally connected; missionally engaged), and practical ministry skills.

In addition to licensing ministers, PMLT elders take the initiative to communicate regularly with retired and unassigned ministers in their region for the purpose of support and relationship. Regions are delegated as follows:

**East.** The East Region has been served by Rev. Greg Helman (Blue Rock UB church, Waynesboro, Pa.) and Rev. Stuart Johns (Idaville UB church, Gardners, Pa.).

**Central.** The Central Region has been served in the north by Rev. Terry Smith (Bethel UB church, Elmore, Ohio) and in the south by Rev. Mike Brown (Franklin UB church, New Albany, Ohio).

**North.** The North Region has been served by Rev. Randy Carpenter (Colwood UB church, Caro, Mich.) and Rev. Lee Rhodes (Countryside UB church, Breckenridge, Mich.).

**West.** The West Region has been served by Rev. Craig Burkholder (Hudson UB church, Hudson, Ind.) and Rev. Troy Green (WestSide Community Church, Monroe, Ind.).

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## Ministerial Licensing

### **Elders Orders were granted to three persons.**

- Dan Reed, family pastor, Bethel UB Church (Elmore, Ohio).
- Michael Elkins, lead pastor, New Hope Community Church (Bryan, Ohio).
- Wesley Skiles, lead pastor, Olive Branch UB church (Lakeville, Ind.) has been approved and will receive his Elders Orders at National Conference.

### **National Church licenses were granted to seven persons.**

- Nick Balsiger, Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Youth, The Well (Huntington, Ind.).
- Aaron de Neui, senior pastor, Philomath UB church (Philomath, Oregon).
- Matt Stemen, pastor of High School Ministries, Emmanuel Community Church (Fort Wayne, Ind.).
- Jason Peterson, Youth and Children's Pastor, Atlantic Avenue UB church (Franklin, Pa.).
- Rick Tawney, church planter, Renew Communities of Columbus, Ohio.
- Ryan Koch, senior pastor, Hopewell UB church (Auburn, Ind.).
- Jennifer Smith, Women's Pastor, Emmanuel Community Church (Fort Wayne, Ind.).

### **Specialized Minister licenses were granted to four persons.**

- Shandra Hathaway, Pastor of Children's Ministries, Emmanuel Community Church (Fort Wayne, Ind.).

7/12/2021

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**DISCIPLES**



- Jim Hippensteel, Associate Pastor of Compassion and Care, The Well (Huntington, Ind.).
- Jim Olinger, executive director, Nicaragua Christian Education Foundation, Highland, Ill.). Jim, from Hillsdale UB church (Hillsdale, Mich.), is an endorsed missionary with UB Global.
- Tiffany Rhine, Early Childhood Coordinator, Fowlerville UB church (Fowlerville, Mich.).

**Provisional licenses were granted to these persons.**

- Ken Meyer, lead pastor, New Horizons Community Church (Rockford, Ohio).
- Jennifer Smith, Women's Pastor, Emmanuel Community Church (Fort Wayne, Ind.).
- Jason Carter, lead pastor, College Park UB church (Huntington, Ind.).
- Alan Harbold, senior pastor, Mount Washington UB church (York, Pa.).
- Brad Buckley, Pastor of Student Ministries, College Park UB church (Huntington, Ind.).
- Frank Yang, Executive Director of UB Global (Huntington, Ind.).
- Brian Black, senior pastor, Macedonia UB church (Greencastle, Pa.).
- Jacob Massey, youth leader, Living Grace Community Church (Fort Wayne, Ind.).
- Jay Leadley, Student Ministries Pastor, Fowlerville UB church (Fowlerville, Mich.).
- Cassie Showerman, Communications Assistant, Fowlerville UB church (Fowlerville, Mich.).
- Jessi Hott, Director of Videography and Design, Emmanuel Community Church (Fort Wayne, Ind.).
- Mark Tinsley, incoming lead pastor, Jerusalem Chapel (Churchville, Va.).
- Neil Estep, Youth Ministry Coordinator, Kilpatrick UB (Woodland, Mich.).
- Jonathan Crider, lead pastor, Mt. Victory UB Church (Decatur, Ind.).
- Byron Spear, Youth and Music Coordinator, Colwood UB church (Caro, Mich.).

**Permanent Lay Minister licenses were granted to four persons:**

- Andrea McIntyre, senior leader, Bethel Temple of Praise (Yonkers, N. Y.).
- Brian Maddox, lay pastor, New Life Church (Chanute, Kansas).
- Nancy Knauer, worship leader, Park Layne UB church (New Carlisle, Ohio).
- Michael Richardson, senior pastor, Cream Ridge UB church (Lenore, Idaho).

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## Summary of PMLT Actions

At the beginning of the 2019-2021 biennium, the PMLT established four priorities:

1. Clarifying educational pathways/continuing education.
2. Creating a plan to develop the next generation of pastoral leaders.
3. Motivating ministers "stuck" in the licensing process.
4. Integrating background checks into the licensing process.

I am pleased to report that all four priorities have been accomplished. The following items summarize our work.

### **Educational Pathways**

The PMLT has defined multiple pathways for ministers to complete their educational requirements for licensing which include both credit and non-credit options. These pathways, which continue to prioritize Huntington University as our primary partner in education, are clearly defined in a re-written chapter of the Pastoral Ministry Handbook.

### **Developing the Next Generation**

The PMLT recognizes the need to continually identify, encourage, and develop the next generation of pastors. In collaboration with Bishop Todd Fetters, we agreed that we will:

1. Be intentional about praying for God to raise up ministers and missionaries.
2. As pastors, be inviting others to test the call of God on their lives.
3. Connect people with other individuals and/or colleges and seminaries to pursue their call.

### **Motivating Ministerial Candidates**

The PMLT believes that the best approach to motivating ministers who appear "stuck" in the licensing



process is primarily relational. Consequently, our regional MLOTs have been providing additional support and encouragement for our ministers. Doing so has enabled us to understand the unique challenges of individual ministers and allowed us to be creative in establishing pathways forward.

#### **Criminal Background/Credit Check**

Desiring to serve as a resource for churches, the PMLT established a process for including both criminal history and financial credit checks for ministers being considered for license. The same screening is also provided for ministers from outside the denomination who are being stationed in UB churches.

#### **Renewal of Licenses**

The PMLT has made ministers responsible for applying for renewal of licenses. Candidates are expected to include both reasons for needing a renewal as well as progress made in licensing advancement prior to consideration for renewal.

#### **Endorsement of Military Chaplains**

The UBNO does not have the personnel nor expertise necessary to navigate the challenges of endorsing military chaplains. The PMLT reviewed and reaffirmed our partnership with the National Association of Evangelicals Chaplains Commission as our endorsing agent for military chaplains.

#### **License Status at Retirement**

The PMLT clarified the licensing status of ministers who were pursuing ordination, but who retired prior to advancement. We agreed that ministers who retire with a National Conference license retain the level of license held at the time of retirement as long as the minister continues to be in good standing. No further renewal is needed. This standard does not apply to either the Provisional or Specialized Minister license.

#### **Pastoral Ministry Handbook**

The Pastoral Ministry Handbook remains the primary source of information concerning the licensing process. I am grateful for the careful assistance Steve Dennie provides in updating both the online and downloadable PDF versions in a timely manner.

One major change to the Handbook is the chapter on education. The new chapter helps ministers understand not only the educational requirements, but also the heart behind our standards.

#### **United Brethren History**

One of the opportunities which gathering restrictions brought our way was in rethinking about delivery systems for the United Brethren History Course, which is a requirement for ministerial licensing. Thanks largely to the creative thinking of Cathy Reich and Rev. Bob Bruce, we transitioned this course to a live, online experience using Zoom. Doing so has enabled participants to engage without the extra challenges of travel. It has also opened opportunities for a variety of UB leaders to make “cameo” visits to the class, which strengthens our relational connectedness.

We continue to hear overwhelmingly positive feedback from class participants and are always looking for ways to further enhance the experience. Since transitioning to this environment, we have begun including multiple facilitators for each class. Doing so broadens our base of future instructors and provides participants a more thorough understanding of the ways our past impacts both the present and future.

#### **Collaboration with Huntington University**

Huntington University remains our preferred provider of ministerial education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. A bachelor degree in a ministry-related field and the Masters of Arts in Pastoral Leadership at HU serves as the “Standard Course of Study” for ministers seeking ordination in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA.

The Idea to Action Symposium, which launched in October 2019, is an example of the ways partnering together serves both the denomination and the University. It has provided high-quality continuing education opportunities for UB ministers and people while raising awareness of the excellence of education being provided by HU. We continue fine-tuning this program while exploring other ways to partner for the benefit of the Kingdom.



## On the Homefront

Janet and I celebrated 30 years of marriage on August 18, 2020. After 15 years of teaching at Cumberland Valley Christian School, Janet will be transitioning to Carlisle Christian Academy in August, 2021

We are blessed to be part of the Mt. Pleasant Church (Chambersburg, Pa.) community. I have been amazed and impressed by the way this congregation has managed the stresses and opportunities which gathering restrictions brought our way. And I'm excited about the future of ministry in our corner of God's Kingdom.

We clearly sense that our sons are exactly where God desires, for which we are grateful. Jim3 is serving as the youth director at The Heights UB church (East Liverpool, Ohio), beginning this role in December 2019. This congregation and community has received him with open arms and is helping him grow in his practice of ministry. David anticipates graduating from Mount Vernon Nazarene University (Ohio) this summer with a degree in Business Management. Although he desires employment as an athletic director, he is open to wherever the Lord may lead.

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## In Closing

It is a pleasure to be part of the UB National Office staff. Bishop Todd Fetters has a unique capacity for balancing the serious work of ministry with the joy of serving God's people. It's an honor to be part of his team.

Cathy Reich provides excellent administrative assistance. Her help is vital in the licensing work, especially in discovering ways to use Church Community Builder to automate our processes in ways which keep us on track and prevent steps from falling through the cracks. She deserves much credit, and I appreciate her ministry.

The rest of the crew is extraordinary as well. Although I miss the occasions to be physically present in Huntington due to gathering restrictions, I've enjoyed connecting with the team during devotional times.