

R.C.O.M.

- Stands for the Region Council on the Ministry.
- Is composed of two representatives from each area in the American Baptist Churches of the Central Region (ABCCR).
- Oversees the licensing and ordination procedures for the ABCCR.
- Shepherds the candidate through the ordination process
- Works with the local church.
- Helps ensure requirements are fulfilled for regional recognition of ordination.
- Deals with issues of clergy misconduct that may result in censure or withdrawal of denominational recognition of license or ordination.

Requirements for Ordination in the ABCCR

- Sponsorship by a local ABCCR church
- Call to an ABCCR related church or ministry
- College and Seminary degrees (BA or BS and MDiv or equivalent)
- Completion of a course in American Baptist history and polity (or its equivalent)
- A License for Ordination conferred at least six months prior to ordination
- Acceptance of the Covenant & Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders of American Baptist Churches and the Covenant of Relationships for the ABCCR.
- Completion of candidacy assessment by approved Career Development Center
- National criminal background check
- Ordination paper
- Examination by the Area or Association Ordination Council

The Message

Scripture

We are not to be hasty in the laying on of hands for ministry. We are to encourage one another to follow God's call.

I Timothy 5:22

Be at Peace

These guidelines will help. Others have gone through the same process. May God bless you on this journey.

Policy Statement

“In accordance with the adopted policy of the ABC/USA and the ABCCR that ‘the practice of homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching,’ the Region Council on the Ministry will not recommend for licensing, ordination, recognition of ordination, or privilege of call any person known to be a practicing homosexual.”

For More Information Contact

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Called To Ministry

What Steps Do I Take?

Helps from the ABCCR
Region Council on the Ministry



Licensure & Ordination

God's Call

For Christians, everything starts with God.

Church Affirmation

The local church recognizes and affirms God's call on your life by voting to grant a local church license for ministry.

Local Church License

The license for ministry granted by the local church is recognized only by that local church and any subsequent congregation that chooses to recognize it. The local church maintains responsibility for watchcare over the licensee.

Formal Regional Notification

At least eight months prior to an individual's anticipated ordination, the local church notifies the Regional Executive Minister in writing of its desires to ordain the candidate.

Meeting with RCOM

An interview is scheduled with representatives to the RCOM to understand your unique call and begin a process to meet Regional standards and requirements.

Certificate of License for Ordination

A Region approved license for ordination should be presented by the local church at least six months prior to ordination.

The Ordination Paper

The ordination paper is a 15-20 page double-spaced paper which expresses your personal Christian experience and theology. It should include:

Personal Christian Experience:

Summarize your faith journey, including profession of faith, church membership(s), significant church responsibilities, call to Christian ministry, Christian growth and education.

Statement of Theology

- a) God: Father, Jesus Christ and Holy Spirit
- b) Sin and redemption
- c) The Incarnation (the person and work of Jesus as the Christ)
- d) Christian Growth
- e) Revelation
- f) The Holy Scripture
- g) Resurrection
- h) The Understanding of Humankind
e.g., Creation, Sin, Repentance, Forgiveness, Prayer (spiritual discipline), Eternal Life, etc.
- i) The church and the Kingdom (including Baptist distinctive)
e.g., The Priesthood of Believers, the Ordinances of the Church, the Church & Ministry, place & practice of Worship, the Autonomy of the Local Church, American Baptist Churches/USA, etc.
- j) Eschatology
- k) Include any other theological statements which are central to your own formation of Christian faith or theology.

The Ordination Process

Selecting a Sponsor

A sponsor or advocate is vital to the ordination process. The sponsor selected by the candidate will work with him/her during the licensing period, while writing the ordination paper and provide support at meetings with RCOM. The sponsor will stand with candidate at the Ordination Council

RCOM Review of Paper

After completion of the ordination paper, RCOM will meet with the candidate to provide feedback and suggestions on the paper. One or more meetings may be needed at this time, depending on revisions suggested.

Ordination Council

When the ordination paper and other requirements are completed, RCOM will instruct the local church to advise area churches of the Council date. To discern the candidate's fitness for ministry, the Ordination Council will review the ordination paper, ask questions to gain a clear understanding of the candidate's beliefs and call to ministry and prayerfully vote on recommendations concerning ordination for the candidate.

If an affirmative vote is cast, an ordination service will be scheduled by the local church and candidate.