

MEMORANDUM

To: Retired Ordained Ministers, Church of the Brethren
RE: **Ordination Renewal/Review 2010**
From: District Executive/Minister and the Executive Director of Ministry
Date: January 15, 2010

The Annual Conference has granted the authority for ordination to the district board. The *1999 Ministerial Leadership Paper* “encourages regular reviews of ordained individuals by district ministry commissions in order to assist the district boards in assessing whether, in specific instances, there has been a change in the relationship between the ordained person and the Church of the Brethren, and these reviews may be synchronized with the renewal of ordination cards every five years.” The renewal/review process is now underway and is to be completed by each district by December 31, 2010.

Ordained leaders in the Church of the Brethren, may be identified in one of nine ways:

1. Pastor of a congregation
2. Person serving a congregation in a self-supporting ministry
3. Administrator or teacher in a theological seminary
4. Teacher of religion in a school, college, or university
5. Staff persons with districts, the General Board and other Annual Conference Agencies
6. Missionary assigned to pastoral or evangelistic duties.
7. Chaplain
8. Person serving in a specialized ministry (e.g., youth ministry, Christian education, camp administrator, ecumenical ministries, spiritual direction, pastoral counselors).
9. Ministers retired from their area of service.

Our records indicate that your category is number 9, “Ministers retired from their area of service.” We are grateful for your many years of ministerial service and leadership. You have much insight and wisdom to share with the church in these retirement years. We value your presence in the life and witness of the church. We have created a special form for retirees to complete as part of the 2010 Ordination Renewal process.

Each case above assumes that you are a member in good standing in a Church of the Brethren congregation. Being a “member in good standing” means that you are an active (presence, prayers, substance) participant in the life of the congregation unless you are non-resident. If you are non-resident, but want to maintain membership in a Church of the Brethren congregation, the congregation should be clear about and supportive of you as a ministerial leader. Otherwise, you are encouraged to move your membership to a church where you can be active. If you are living in an area where there is no Church of the Brethren congregation and want to maintain ordination in the Church of the Brethren, membership in a Church of the Brethren congregation is still required, and you are expected to be a “member in good standing” as described above. Please remember you have the responsibility for nurturing the relationship in any of these circumstances.

The Ministerial Leadership paper, adopted by the 1999 Annual Conference, contains a section on ministerial accountability that applies to all ordained ministers in the Church of the Brethren. If you do not have a copy of the Ministerial Leadership paper, it can be ordered from Brethren Press by calling 1-800-323-8039. It is also available online at www.brethren.org. Click on “Lead,” then Ministerial Leadership Manual documents.

If you have questions about any of this, please call your District Executive/Minister, or the Executive Director of Ministry (1-800-323-8039). Thank you in advance for your cooperation and prompt response by March 31, 2010.

Mary Jo Flory-Steury

District Executive/Minister

Mary Jo Flory-Steury, Executive Director of Ministry

ORDINATION REVIEW 2010

Ordained Minister _____

Congregation _____

District _____

Introduction:*(excerpts from the 1999 Ministerial Leadership paper)*

- † The district boards have been given the authority for ordination in the Church of the Brethren. They ordain persons on behalf of the denomination. *(O. Authority of the District Board)*
- † Based as it is upon the Spirit's empowerment but also upon a process of discernment and designation by the church, ordained leadership is not seen as a *right* as much as a *gift* and a naming of gifts... Regular reviews of ordained persons by District Ministry Commissions are encouraged in order to assist the District Boards in assessing whether, in specific instances, there has been a change in the relationship between the ordained person and the Church of the Brethren, and these reviews may be synchronized with the renewal of ordination cards every five years. *(G. Guidelines for Discontinuing the Call to Ordained Leadership)*
- † If the District Board and the congregation approve the candidate for ordination, the person shall be ordained to ministerial leadership with the laying on of hands during a worship service. *(E. The Process of Ordination)*

Ordination Vows:*(For all who minister, pp 298-300)*

- † Do you now renew your baptismal vows, reaffirming your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and your commitment to serve him as a disciple?
- † Do you believe that God is calling you to the special tasks of the set-apart ministry within the church?
- † Will you continue your search for the ways of God through prayer and meditation, through serious study of the scripture, and through openness to the witness and testimony of other voices of faith?
- † Do you affirm your devotion to the church of Jesus Christ, and specifically to the Church of the Brethren, which calls you to this ministry? And do you promise to live in harmony with its principles, ordinances, and doctrines, being at all times subject to its discipline and governance?
- † Will you, with God as your helper, carry out faithfully the obligations of the ministry: preaching the Word to the age in which you live, visiting the sick and the brokenhearted, seeking the lost, comforting the troubled and distressed, and by word and example leading all with whom you minister into the fullness of the grace of Christ?

Please complete and return this form to the District Executive/Minister of your district by March 31, 2010. As you complete this form we ask that you prayerfully study and remember the words of introduction, the vows you took as you were ordained to the set-apart ministry in the Church of the Brethren the accountability we have to Christ and one another for our ministry.

Current Area of Ministerial Service *(Check the Appropriate Box)**(see the 1999 Ministerial Leadership paper, pages 9-10 for further explanation)*

1. Pastor of a congregation
2. Person serving a congregation in a self-supporting ministry
3. Administrator or teacher in a theological seminary
4. Teacher of religion in a school, college, or university
5. Staff persons with districts, the General Board and other Annual Conference Agencies
6. Missionary assigned to pastoral or evangelistic duties.
7. Chaplain
8. Person serving in a specialized ministry (e.g., youth ministry, Christian education, camp administrator, ecumenical ministries, spiritual direction, pastoral counselors).
9. Ministers retired from their area of service.

II. Ministry Setting *(if serving in retirement)*

Name of Ministry Setting: Congregation, Agency, or Institution

Address City State Zip

III. Membership

I am a member of the _____ Church of the Brethren.

IV. Ministerial Ethics:

1. *I have read the Ethics in Ministry Relations–2008 paper.* ___ Yes ___ No

2. *I have read the Guidelines: Ministerial Service and Membership in a Former Parish.*(2008)

(A copy is included in this mailing.) ___ Yes ___ No

3. *I attended a district sponsored and/or approved training event on ministerial ethics within the past five years:* Date _____ Location _____

4. *I am willing to accept the Ethics in Ministry Relations – 2008 paper’s requirements and procedures.* ___ Yes ___ No

If no, please explain: _____

V. Continuing Education within the past five years:

The *Guidelines for Continuing Education* adopted by Annual Conference in 2002 state that while continuing education is not required for retirees it is encouraged. Please list continuing education events or valued learning experiences you’ve participated in during the last five years.

Event Name/Course Title	Institution or Agency
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

VI. Areas of Ministerial Service

The *1999 Ministerial Leadership Paper* requires the district offices to inform the denominational Office of Ministry within 30 days of certain ministerial changes. Please check the boxes below, indicating your cooperation. I will within 30 days:

Notify my district office when I have a change of address, phone number, name change, and/or any ministerial activity.

[Retired]

VII. My Desire (*Check the appropriate boxes*)

I desire to commit myself to the work of Jesus Christ and to continue my ordination in the Church of the Brethren for another five years and continue to willingly commit myself to the vows I took at my ordination.

Before making this decision I desire a conversation/meeting with the District Ministry Commission and/or District Executive to discuss and discern the continuation of my call as an ordained minister in the Church of the Brethren.

My reasons: _____

I no longer sense a calling to the set-apart ministry and thereby request the termination* of my ordination in the Church of the Brethren.

My reasons: _____

* Upon action of the District Board I will surrender and return to the District Office all my ordination documents (card, certificate) within 30 days of the action.

To the best of my knowledge, the above responses are true and accurate.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

<i>District Office Use Only</i>
District Action _____
District Executive _____
Date _____