

L

THE MINISTRY AND MINISTERIAL TRAINING

L 05 Ministerial Training

L 05 05 General Provisions—The educational requirement for entrance into the ministry shall be completion of the Ministerial training course as prescribed by the Division Committee. Candidates for the ministry who, because of unusual circumstances, have not completed the Ministerial training course as prescribed by the Division and who are considered for employment as ministers, shall be referred for consideration to the respective union committee for careful study and implementation of applicable Division policy in such circumstances.

L 10 Ministerial Internship

L 10 05 Purpose of Plan—The Ministerial internship is intended to stimulate interest in the work of the gospel minister and to co-ordinate the work of the union and local conferences/missions/fields in selecting, training, and placing recruits for evangelistic service.

L 10 10 Definition of Term “Ministerial Internship”— “Ministerial Internship” as here used designates a period of service spent in practical ministerial training, to be entered into after the completion of the prescribed Ministerial training course; this training period to be served under supervision in a local conference/mission/field, at a prescribed wage scale.

L 15 Ministerial Internship—Procedures

L 15 05 Length of Internship—The length of the Ministerial internship shall be two years. The intern shall be appointed for twelve months of full-time service, and if judged to have done successful work during that period he/she shall be appointed for a second period of twelve months.

L 15 10 Number of Internships—The number of internships to be granted each year, including the number to be allotted to each conference, shall be determined by the union committee. The unions shall allot these internships to their local conferences/missions/fields.

L 15 15 Wages of Interns—In harmony with the internship principle, the salary rate shall be according to the prescribed wage scale. It is recommended that on completion of the internship period the employee be placed at or near the maximum for licenced ministers.

L 15 30 Licensure—Ministerial interns shall receive denominational licensure (ministerial, commissioned minister, or missionary licence in harmony with Division policy) when they begin their placement.

L 15 35 Service Record—In considering eligibility for retirement benefits, the service record shall begin when the intern begins his/her service.

L 15 40 Conference/Mission/Field Responsibility—1. Conferences/ Missions/Fields shall assume responsibility for direct supervision in training ministerial interns, giving them opportunity for practical professional development.

2. Local conferences/missions/fields shall place ministerial interns in the conference/mission/field where there is prospect for well-rounded development in all the phases of the ministry—evangelistic, pastoral, teaching (i.e., personal and group instruction), and various departmental activities.

a. Evangelistic—During the internship period, preferably at the outset, opportunity should be given to the intern to associate with one or more experienced evangelists that by observation and participation he/she can receive inspiration, and observe the techniques of successful soul winning.

b. Pastoral—The training shall include some time in association with a pastor of experience, either in a sizable church or in a district. During this time he/she shall be given opportunity to observe and participate with the pastor in the numerous duties involved in caring for the flock.

c. Teaching—In the development of a person who is “apt to teach,” (2 Tim. 2:24) opportunity shall be given for the intern to participate in teaching individuals in personal evangelism and in groups such as community Bible schools, Bible and baptismal classes.

d. Promotional—During the internship period the intern shall be given opportunity to develop qualities of leadership and organisation under the supervision of the conference/mission/field departmental directors in programmes such as youth camps, Ingathering promotion, and educational conventions.

3. During the period of internship and preferably in the final year opportunity shall be given to the intern to lead out in an evangelistic effort for which he/she shall be held personally responsible.

4. In accepting an intern for ministerial work, it is understood that the conference/mission/field intends to continue the individual as a regular employee. A report is to be presented to the employing conference/ mission/field committee at the close of the first and second year’s service stating either that the intern gives promise of development in ministerial lines or has failed to make good progress.

L 15 45 Qualifications of Candidates—1. Eligibility for internship shall include:

- a. A living Christian experience.
- b. Completion of the prescribed Ministerial training course.
- c. Recommendation from the faculty of the school attended as to religious attitude and experience, studiousness, and industry.
- d. Recommendations by the local conference/mission/field committees for acceptance by the union committee.
- e. Adaptability and willingness to work.
- f. Aptitude for public speaking and labour.

2. The Ministerial internship shall not include those whose years of experience or service in other lines of denominational work qualify them to enter the ministry with a reasonable assurance of success, and for whom such a period of training is impractical.

3. Individuals who have not completed their preparatory training and who knowingly plan to return to college/university for further work shall not be eligible for internship; only those who have finished their preparatory work and present themselves as candidates for continuous service will qualify. However, one who entered denominational service in some line other than the ministry and who later completes the prescribed ministerial training course, may be accepted as a ministerial intern.

L 15 50 Appointment of Interns—1. Candidates for the ministry desiring to apply for ministerial internships shall complete the application form during the last year of the ministerial training programme and submit it to the college/university for endorsement. If the application is accepted by the local conference/mission/field in which the applicant is to serve, the conference/mission field shall submit it to the union for final approval.

2. A conference/mission/field intending to employ a ministerial intern shall secure recommendations from the last college/university attended by the student. The application shall be passed to the union in the regular way through the conference/mission/field in which the applicant is to work.

3. The action of the union committee becomes authorisation for employment of the ministerial intern and payment of the employing organisation's part of the salary, in harmony with the beginning date as determined by the union committee.

4. Inasmuch as ministerial interns are appointed by the union committee on recommendation of the conference/mission/field committees, an intern shall be dropped only by the same procedure; that is, by the union committee, on recommendation of the conference/mission/ field committees.

L 15 55 Calling of Ministerial Interns—Only in exceptional cases shall ministerial interns and sponsored students be called from their sponsoring organisations. However, when such calls are placed they shall be made on the following basis:

1. Calls for ministerial interns and sponsored students to serve outside their base union should be placed only in very special cases in which language, prior training, or experience is a factor and the need cannot be met otherwise. Such appointments are not to be made until they are cleared with the sponsoring organisation.

2. Calls between unions for ministerial interns are discouraged. However, when such calls are made, the union policy covering the financial provisions for amortisation of moving expense shall apply.

L 20 Newbold College

L 20 05 Newbold College—1. The purpose of Newbold College is to provide, in harmony with the educational principles of the Seventh-day Adventist denomination, professional education for the gospel ministry and opportunity for such graduate study and research as will contribute to the advancement of sound scholarship in the fields of Bible and religious history.

To this end the Seminary offers courses in the various fields of theological study leading to the Master of Divinity degree. These courses are given in six departments—Old Testament, New Testament, Theology and Christian Philosophy, Church History, Christian Ministry, and World Mission.

The general plan is that young people take the full Master of Divinity curriculum, although it is recognised that God does call men and women from various professions or vocations into the work of the ministry. This curriculum is open to those who have earned a Bachelor of Arts or comparable degree, preferably with a concentration in religion or theology, and who are recommended as candidates for the ministry.

2. It is recommended that conferences/missions/fields, sanitariums, schools, and publishing houses make provision for giving employees the privilege of attending this school in order to enlarge their knowledge of Bible and religious history and the great truths of this last-day message; and that they keep in mind the following factors when selecting those who shall have the privilege of attending the Seminary:

- a. The need and possibility of self-improvement,
- b. Qualifications for advanced study,
- c. Prospects of future service in the cause,
- d. The special needs of individuals to prepare for designated lines of

work.

Conferences/missions/fields and institutions should take a favourable attitude toward employees who desire to attend and who are able to meet their own expenses and who in the judgment of the committee or board would profit by such attendance, giving them leave of absence with the understanding that they will return to their duties when the designated schoolwork is completed.

L 25 Licenced Minister—Role and Status

L 25 05 Responsibility and Authority—The responsibility and authority of the licenced minister may in certain circumstances be extended to include the performance of specific functions of the ordained minister in the churches to which he/she is assigned. The authority for extending this responsibility belongs to the union committee which shall clearly outline for its territory the ministerial functions which may be delegated to licenced ministers, taking into account:

1. The length and extent of the ministerial training programmes in its territory,

2. The needs of the fields in its territory, taking into consideration the distribution of membership, the number of churches and the ministerial help available,

3. Any circumstances that demand special consideration.

L 25 10 Delegating Ministerial Functions—The following shall be required in all unions as a basis for delegating ministerial functions to a licenced minister:

1. He/she shall have completed the prescribed ministerial training programme of the Seventh-day Adventist Church as defined by the union committee for its territory.

2. He/she shall hold a current ministerial licence.

3. He/she shall have been appointed by the conference/mission/field executive committee to a ministerial or pastoral responsibility.

4. He/she shall have been elected as a church elder in the churches, or named as elder in the companies to which he is assigned.

5. He/she shall have been ordained as local church elder.

L 25 15 Authorising Ministerial Functions—The conference/ mission/field executive committee shall authorise, in harmony with union policy, which functions of the ordained minister the licenced minister may perform.

L 25 20 Review of Development—The licenced minister's leadership progress, professional development and spiritual growth shall be reviewed annually by the conference/mission/field administration and executive committee. (See also Total Commitment to God declaration, A 15 15.)

L 25 25 Withdrawing Authorisation—The licenced minister's authorisation to serve as a minister of the gospel and perform functions of an ordained minister may be withdrawn by the conference/mission/field executive committee.

L 25 30 Ordination—The male licenced minister is ordinarily ordained to the gospel ministry after he has satisfactorily fulfilled a period of pastoral/evangelistic service during which time he has given evidence of his call to the ministry. The spiritual rite of ordination constitutes the official recognition by the Seventh-day Adventist Church of his divine call to the ministry as a life commitment, and is his endorsement to serve as a minister of the gospel in any part of the world.

L 25 35 Commissioning—The licenced minister who is not on track to ordination to the gospel ministry after he/she has satisfactorily fulfilled a period of pastoral/evangelistic service during which time he/she has given evidence of his/her call to the ministry will be commissioned in a special service. The service constitutes the official recognition by the Seventh-day Adventist Church of his/her divine call to the ministry as a life commitment, and is his/her endorsement to serve as a minister of the gospel.

L 30 Ministers from Other Denominations

1. When ministers from other denominations become members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and desire to become Adventist ministers, they

shall, before becoming involved in a formal study programme, be expected to give evidence of their stability in the faith and of their aptitude as candidates for the Seventh-day Adventist ministry by being active in a local church. Upon recommendation of the local conference/mission/field committee and approval by the union committee, they may participate full time in church activities in co-operation with and under the direction of the local pastor for a minimum of six months. An additional six months may be granted if after careful review by the local conference/mission/field committee it is deemed necessary. Great care should be given to the selection of the pastors under whose direction they will work so that they may be assured of the most sympathetic attention possible during this difficult transition period. Where recommended by the local conference/mission/field and approved by the union committee, a subsistence allowance may be given to them during this period, the amount and source of funds to be in harmony with the union policy.

2. When ministers from other denominations have met the conditions outlined in paragraph 1. above, and have given evidence of their stability in the message and aptitude as candidates for the Seventh-day Adventist ministry, the local and union conferences/missions where they are located, in co-operation with the Division, shall develop a plan by which they may attend one of our colleges/universities for a minimum of two semesters so as to prepare themselves for service in the Seventh-day Adventist ministry. Any allowances given will be in harmony with and shared on the basis outlined by the union policy.

3. The eligibility of such ministers for financial support as outlined in paragraphs 1. and 2. above shall be determined by the union committee on the recommendation of the conference/mission/field committees concerned.

4. Application for approval of financial support as outlined in paragraphs 1. and 2. above shall be submitted to the union and forwarded to the conference/mission/field for their endorsement.

a. In considering the application, the administrators shall give attention to each minister's qualifications and employment history and the likelihood of being able to render acceptable service in the Seventh-day Adventist ministry. In case there is any question about the applicant's ability to profit by a period of study, the union will consult with the college/university concerned.

b. When union assistance is expected, such a minister shall in no case enter into a study programme until financial arrangements have been finalised and approved by the union concerned.

5. Upon completion of their study programme, ministers who have been on this plan shall look for guidance in their future work to the union and conference/mission/field that recommended them.

6. Ordained or unordained ministers from other denominations who become members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and continue in the ministry may be issued ministerial licences or commissioned minister licences after they have completed their period of study and orientation and have entered upon regular employment in any conference/mission/ field or institution. Ordained men

received thus into denominational work shall be ordained to the ministry of the Seventh-day Adventist Church prior to being issued ministerial credentials.

7. Honorary/Emeritus Ministerial Credentials may be granted, after careful consideration by the union committee concerned, to ordained men from other denominations residing in its territory who have become members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and who are retired from active service and therefore do not come under the above provisions. The issuing of such honorary/emergitus credentials does not carry with it any financial obligation. Such ministers shall exercise ministerial functions only in counsel with their local conference/mission/field office or other Seventh-day Adventist ministers in their community, as do other retired ministers holding similar credentials.

L 35 Qualifications for Ordination to the Ministry

L 35 05 Vital Concern of Church—The setting apart of men for the sacred work of the ministry should be regarded as one of the most vital concerns of the church. The spiritual growth of God's people, their development in the virtues of Christ, as well as their relationship to one another as members of His body, are all closely bound up with and in many respects dependent upon the spirituality, efficiency, and consecration of those who minister in Christ's stead.

L 35 10 Scriptural Counsel—The requirements concerning the qualifications for the ministry are mentioned in the Scriptures. In Old Testament times the minister was known as "the man of God" (1 Kings 12:22), sometimes the man of the Spirit. Detailed instructions were given to Moses concerning the qualifications of the priesthood, with the priest's dress, demeanour, and spiritual understanding being emphasised. Then, in order to keep continually before the congregation the high calling of those who served in the tabernacle, the high priest wore on his miter the words "Holiness to the Lord."

In the New Testament the picture is similar. The apostle Paul speaks of himself as "a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God" (Rom 1:1). This matter of separation to the ministry was made very clear to him by the Lord Himself when, appearing to him on the Damascus road, He said, "I have appeared unto thee. . . to make thee a minister. . . ; delivering thee from the people. . . unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God" (Acts 26:16-18). He was stopped on the way, called to the ministry, and then as the anointed representative of God sent back to the people to be God's messenger and to open their eyes to the glory of the gospel. Later in writing of the work of the minister he spoke of it as a high calling (Phil 3:14).

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we read, "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God" (5:4).

L 35 15 Spirit of Prophecy Counsel—“A man can have no greater honour than to be accepted by God as an able minister of the gospel.”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p 328.

The proof of a man’s divine call must be clearly evident before the church sets him apart by ordination.

“Ministers should be examined especially to see if they have an intelligent understanding of the truth for this time, so that they can give a connected discourse upon the prophecies or upon practical subjects. If they cannot clearly present Bible subjects, they need to be hearers and learners still. In order to be teachers of Bible truth, they should earnestly and prayerfully search the Scriptures, and become conversant with them. All these things should be carefully and prayerfully considered before men are sent into the field of labour.”—*Gospel Workers*, p 439.

“A true minister does the work of the Master. He feels the importance of his work, realising that he sustains to the church and to the world a relation similar to that which Christ sustained. . . Those who hear him know that he has drawn near to God in fervent, effectual prayer. The Holy Spirit has rested upon him, his soul has felt the vital, heavenly fire, and he is able to compare spiritual things with spiritual. . . Hearts are broken by his presentation of the love of God, and many are led to inquire, ‘What must I do to be saved?’”—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp 328, 329.

“The conversion of sinners and their sanctification through the truth is the strongest proof a minister can have that God has called him to the ministry. The evidence of his apostleship is written upon the hearts of those converted, and is witnessed to by their renewed lives. . . A minister is greatly strengthened by these seals of his ministry.”—*Ibid*, p 328.

A man needs to show clear evidence of God's call to ministry. This is the Lord's counsel regarding the examination of ministerial candidates:

“There has been too little done in examining ministers; and for this very reason churches have had the labours of unconverted, inefficient men, who have lulled the members to sleep, instead of awakening them to greater zeal and earnestness in the cause of God. There are ministers who come to the prayer-meeting, and pray the same old, lifeless prayers over and over; they preach the same dry discourses from week to week and from month to month. . . The only way in which we can correct this wide-spread evil, is to examine closely every one who would become a teacher of the Word. Those upon whom this responsibility rests, should acquaint themselves with his history since he professed to believe the truth. His Christian experience and his knowledge of the Scriptures, the way in which he holds present truth, should all be understood. No one should be accepted as a labourer in the cause of God, until he makes it manifest that he has a real, living experience in the things of God.”—*Gospel Workers*, pp 437, 438.

L 35 20 Examination of Candidates—This counsel lays a definite obligation on the leaders in charge of an ordination service. They should plan for

the examination of candidates in such a way as to make this important procedure not simply perfunctory but a true evaluation of the candidate's fitness. Sufficient time for careful evaluation should be made available, particularly in cases where a number of candidates are to be examined. When applicable the candidate should have his wife present for the examination, realising that ordination affects not only the individual but the entire family.

L 35 25 Service Before Ordination—Undue haste has sometimes been apparent in recommending candidates for ordination. On the other hand, there has also been undue delay, extending as long as twenty years and more. Both these attitudes are wrong. Although no employee should be hurried into ordination, it is just as important that when a man is ready to be thus set apart, the service should not be unduly delayed. Embarrassment has been brought to employees at times because of being unable to perform certain important ministerial responsibilities. However, the fact that a licenced minister has spent four, five, or even eight years in the field is of itself no guarantee that he is ready for ordination. One with less ability for evangelistic preaching or less aptitude for other lines of ministerial and pastoral work than some others will naturally take longer to develop. Indeed, some may never qualify for ordination. Those who do not reveal particular ministerial talent and aptitude for definite public leadership should be encouraged to develop as personal soul winners, recognising that their call is to some other work less distinctly ministerial.

L 35 30 Fostering Growth—Conference/mission/field presidents and executive committees should recognise their responsibility to foster the growth of young ministers and see to it that they are given opportunities for development. Any plan that diverts the minister-to-be from his actual training and growth is to be discouraged. Injustices have been perpetrated when licenced ministers possessing manual skills have been asked to spend long periods serving in other capacities to the neglect of their ministerial development. Such a plan may save the conference money, but it delays the development of the minister.

L 35 35 Licentiate—When a conference/mission/field gives a young man a ministerial licence it should be recognised as a pledge on the part of the conference leadership to foster that employee's growth. When a man accepts a ministerial licence he should regard it as a pledge on his part to render the utmost service of which he is capable. Such a licence, however, is not a commitment on the part of a conference that ultimate ordination is assured. It merely provides the opportunity for the licentiate to prove his calling. Although all cannot have the same conditions under which to develop into mature ministers, a man who is called of God will reveal his calling by his whole manner of life and the burden he carries for those who are still sinners. In some circumstances it is difficult to provide conditions under which public evangelism can be carried out, but he who is called of the Lord will be able to give proof of his calling and of his aptness for the ministry as a lifework.

In some areas of the world field educational facilities are somewhat limited. If that is the case, it will naturally take longer for a minister to develop his

readiness for ordination. Therefore, in consideration of all the varied conditions, it is impossible to specify any definite length of time for the professional development and spiritual growth of the licentiate. The fact that a licenced minister is assigned to inter-division service should not of itself delay his ordination beyond the time it would have ordinarily taken place. His service record should be passed along to the new field and his development receive proper evaluation. In suitable cases a licenced minister who is approaching ordination at the time of his inter-division call may be ordained prior to departure.

L 35 40 Proof of Calling—Ordination of men who have not given clear evidence of their call as soul-saving ministers must be avoided. It will always be true that some men, having been trained for lines of work other than the ministry, in time will give proof of their divine call to this sacred work. The church, recognising this proof, will feel called to set them apart by ordination but such cases are exceptions. Because a man holds a responsible position in the organised work, he is not by this fact alone eligible for ordination.

L 35 45 Non-ministerial Employees—There are certain lines of work in the denomination that are not regarded as strictly ministerial but which provide experience for some ministerial development. For example, a college/university president or a secondary school principal with young people under his care bears the responsibility not only for their academic training but also for their spiritual welfare. Therefore, in a sense, he is their pastor, and in association with the Bible teacher is doing actual ministerial work. However, his call to that responsibility is not of itself a basis for ordination. No man's position per se should influence a committee to set him apart to the holy work of the ministry unless and until he gives definite proof of his aptitude and spiritual maturity and has in his own soul the conviction that God has called him to the ministry as a lifework.

Employees in other capacities—such as editors, institutional leaders, conference/mission/field secretary-treasurers, departmental directors, secretaries and denominationally employed physicians/dentists—may also come to the place in their service where ordination is appropriate; however, the divine call to the ministry must be clear before the church ordains them to the gospel ministry. Such employees—as all candidates for ministerial credentials—must have the personal conviction that God has called them to the ministry, give evidence of the ministerial call and gift, and be known widely for their piety and ability as soul winners before their ordination is recommended.

L 35 50 Not a Reward—Ordination must never become simply a reward for faithful service or be considered an opportunity to add title and prestige to an employee. Neither is it an honour to be sought by the individual or his family or friends on his behalf. Such attitudes and tactics seriously minimise the sacredness of the ministry in the eyes of the church.

L 35 55 Ministry a Calling—The ministry is not merely a profession; it is a calling. It is not for a period of time until some other more attractive occupation beckons a man, but it is a lifework. Having put his hand to the plough, he is not

free to look backward except at the peril of his soul. The apostle Paul, like the prophets of old, felt himself “in bonds” (Col 4:3), and cried out, “Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel” (1 Cor 9:16). A man ordained to the sacred work of the ministry should feel the same responsibility as the apostle of old, and the conference/mission/field that employs him should see that he is free to do his God-appointed work.

The simple record of the ordination of the apostles is impressive: “And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth unto him whom he would: and they came unto him. And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach” (Mark 3:13, 14). The first office of a man ordained to the ministry is that he should be *with* God. Only then is he qualified to go forth to men to preach the Word of God. A man who is thus consecrated and who enjoys constant communion with his Lord rejoices in the privilege of rendering complete service, refusing to be entangled in business for personal gain and other things of this world in order that, by the grace of God, he may give complete devotion to the cause he loves. Even when he reaches his retirement years he should feel the call of God to the same standard of life as he did in his most active years, “that the ministry be not blamed” (2 Cor 6:3). (See also Total Commitment to God declaration, A 15 15.)

L 40 Ordained to World Church

Workers who are ordained to the gospel ministry are set apart to serve the world Church, primarily as pastors and preachers of the Word, and are subject to the direction of the Church in regard to the type of ministry and their place of service. It should therefore be understood by those accepting ordination and who are engaged in specialised ministries such as administration, teaching, and departmental leadership, that they may be reassigned by the Church to pastoral, preaching and evangelistic duties.

L 45 Procedure in Authorising Ordination

L 45 05 Authorisation—Ordination to the ministry is the setting apart of the employee to a sacred calling, not for one field alone but for the world Church and therefore needs to be done with wide counsel. The following plan is the proper procedure, except in special cases where serious delay would result:

1. The administration concerned shall arrange for a preliminary examination of the prospective candidate and his ministry.
2. The matter of ordination is then taken under careful consideration by the local conference committee (see L 45 15) for an employee of the conference or one of its institutions, and by the union committee for an employee of the union or one of its institutions.
3. After favourable consideration the local conference committee will submit the name of the candidate with its findings and convictions to the union for counsel and approval.

4. The Division and its institutional boards will submit names recommended for ordination to the Division Committee.

L 45 10 Ordination Ceremony—Time and Place—The time and place for the ordination ceremony, including the examination of the candidate, with his wife (if applicable), shall be arranged by the approving organisation in counsel with the union.

L 45 15 Ordination in Missions/Fields—1. In a mission/field authorised by the Division to issue ministerial credentials, the procedure shall be the same as followed in L 45 05 for local conferences.

2. In missions/fields not authorised by the Division to grant ministerial credentials, ordination to the ministry at the time of its mission/field sessions or between sessions shall be by vote of the union committee in counsel with the local mission/field committee.

3. In the case of union missions/attached local conferences/missions and fields, the local executive committee will submit the name of the candidate with its findings and convictions to the Division for counsel and approval.

L 50 Examination of Candidates for Ordination

1. Before any ordination is carried out, there shall be careful, unhurried, and prayerful examination of the candidates as to their fitness for the work of the ministry. The results of their labour as licentiates should be reviewed, and the examination should cover the great fundamental facts of the gospel. Before the church sets a man apart by ordination he should have given satisfactory evidence of:

- a. A call to the ministry as a lifework,
- b. A belief in and knowledge of the Scriptures,
- c. A clear understanding and full acceptance of the vital truths we believe we are called to proclaim to the world,
- d. An experience in various kinds of ministerial responsibility,
- e. Entire consecration of body, soul, and spirit,
- f. Spiritual stability,
- g. Social maturity,
- h. An aptness as a teacher of truth,
- i. An ability to lead souls from sin into holiness,
- j. Souls won to Christ,
- k. A co-operative attitude and confidence in the organisation and functioning of the church,
- l. A life of consistent exemplary Christian conduct,
- m. An exemplary family,
- n. Being a model steward in tithe and offerings,
- o. An understanding of and adherence to church principles as set forth in the *Church Manual*.

2. The examination of candidates for ordination is conducted by ordained ministers. Ordained representatives of conferences/missions/fields/institutions/unions/ divisions/General Conference, who are present, may be invited to assist in the examination. Where it is deemed advisable by the conference/mission/field executive committee, one or more lay persons may be selected to participate.

L 55 Ordination Service

A special ordination service should be conducted, preferably on a Sabbath afternoon, which will exalt the office of the ministry in the eyes of the people and solemnise the call in the heart of the candidate.

L 60 Safeguarding Credentials—The Integrity of the Ministry

L 60 05 Union Responsibility—The union and conferences/ missions/fields share the responsibility for safeguarding the integrity of the ministry and are required by denominational action and practice to assure that credentials issued within their respective territories shall indeed certify that the holders are in good and unquestioned standing, properly subject to invitation to any other field of service.

L 60 10 Integrity of the Ministry—In any case where the integrity or the moral or professional standing of any holder of credentials is called into question, it is the duty of the union to join the local conference/ mission/field in conferring, with a purpose to clear away any uncertainty, in order that no reproach or shadow may be left to rest upon all the credentials held by the ministry. Where the matters involved are of such a character that the union and conference/mission/field committees are unable to resolve the difficulty and announce to all a clear record for the ministry, the matter shall be referred to the division by action of both local and union committees together, or by action of one body separately, inasmuch as any uncertainty in the matter of what ministerial credentials stand for in one field casts a shadow on all credentials and is a matter of general denominational concern.

When appropriate, the disciplinary measures set forth in L 60 20 and L 60 25 shall apply.

L 60 15 Integrity of Organisational Officers—In the event the integrity or the moral or professional standing of an executive officer of a division, union, or conference/mission/field is called into question, the process to be followed to safeguard the integrity of the ministry shall be as set out in the division policies. Should those processes fail and the matters involved be of such a character that the executive committee of the organisation served by the officer is unable to resolve the difficulty, the matter shall be referred to the next higher organisation. The administration of the higher organisation shall call, and its president shall chair, a meeting of the executive committee of the organisation served by the officer in question. The officers of the higher organisation shall meet with the

executive committee of the lower organisation in an endeavour to resolve the matter, provided those exercising voting rights shall not exceed ten per cent of the membership of the executive committee of the lower organisation present.

In the event that the matter remains unresolved, the higher organisation shall proceed as follows:

1. In the case of the Division, a union mission, or mission/field, the executive committee of the higher organisation shall make a determination on the matter.

2. In the case of a conference or union conference, the higher organisation shall call a constituency meeting of the organisation served by the officer, and having set before it the facts of the case, call upon the constituency to resolve the matter.

When appropriate, the disciplinary measures set forth in L 60 20 and L 60 25 shall apply.

L 60 20 Reasons for Discipline of Ministers—Discipline shall be administered to an ordained/licenced/commissioned minister in the following circumstances:

1. *Moral Fall*—In the case of a moral fall in violation of the seventh commandment, including those violations involving sexual perversions, the minister has, by that transgression, made void his/her calling and, where applicable, ordination to the sacred office of the ministry.

2. *Apostasy*—In the case of apostasy whereby the minister falls away to the world, or identifies with, or gives continuing support to, any activity subversive to the denomination, and/or persistently refuses to recognise properly constituted church authority or to submit to the order and discipline of the Church, he/she has, by such disloyalty, proven unworthy of a place or part in the gospel ministry of this Church.

3. *Dissidence*—Discipline may also be administered in the case of a minister who openly expresses significant dissidence regarding the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Continued and unrepentant dissidence may eventually be seen by the Church to be apostasy and identified as such by the minister's administrative organisation after counseling with the next higher organisation.

4. *Embezzlement or Theft*—Embezzlement or theft of funds or property to which the minister has no lawful right, or the willful misappropriation of the same.

5. *Other Reasons*—Any other conduct which is inconsistent with the high standards of the Christian ethic, and which casts a shadow over the integrity of the ministry, such as violence or other questionable activity, and which demonstrates that the individual is unworthy as a leader in the Church.

L 60 25 Steps in Discipline of Ministers—When discipline must be administered in the case of a minister, four aspects of the minister's relationship to the Church may be affected: his/her credential/licence, his ordination, his/her church membership and his/her denominational employment. The discipline and

corresponding procedure for administering such discipline in relation to each of these aspects is as follows:

1. *Credential/Licence*—The credential/licence of a minister who experiences a moral fall or apostatises shall be withdrawn permanently by his/her employing committee, after consultation with the next higher organisation. His/her credential/licence may also be withdrawn in the case of dissidence as defined in L 60 20, paragraph 3. above, after consultation with the next higher organisation, but such withdrawal shall be reviewed by the committee after a stipulated period/periods which shall be determined at the time of withdrawal.

2. *Ordination*—a. A minister who experiences a moral fall or apostatises has made void his ordination. This changed relationship shall be recognised and recorded by his employing organisation with the approval of the respective union committee (General Conference or Division Committee in the case of a General Conference/division institution). He shall be ineligible for future employment as a Seventh-day Adventist minister.

b. A licenced minister who experiences a moral fall or apostatises shall be ineligible for future ordination or employment as a Seventh-day Adventist minister.

3. *Church Membership*—The organisation which has withdrawn a credential/licence permanently and, in the case of an ordained minister has recorded the voiding of his ordination, shall inform the local church of which the offending minister is a member. It shall be the duty of the Church to administer discipline as provided for in the *Church Manual* in the section “Reasons for Which Members Shall Be Disciplined.”

4. *Denominational Employment*—It is recognised that a minister who has experienced a moral fall or has apostatised has access to the mercy and pardoning grace of God and may desire to return to the Church. Such an individual must be assured of the love and goodwill of his/her fellow believers. However, for the sake of the good name of the Church and the maintaining of moral standards, he/she must plan to devote his/her life to employment other than that of the gospel ministry, the teaching ministry, or denominational leadership.

L 60 30 Counseling and Career Guidance—Where practical the organisation involved shall provide a professional programme of counseling and career guidance for the minister and family to assist them in transition.

L 60 35 Rebaptism—A minister who has been disfellowshipped from the Church because of a moral fall or apostasy, but who subsequently gives evidence of repentance, conversion and reformation of life, shall be rebaptised before rejoining the Church.