

PART 6

MINISTRY

Chapter 1

MINISTERIAL ORDERS AND REGULATIONS

A. Meaning of Ministry

3000. Ministry in the Christian context means service. It is a term which has been lifted out of the commonplace through the modeling of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is identified in both the Old and New Testaments as the Servant or Minister of God and man. His service involved His humiliation in the incarnation, His self-forgetful teaching and healing activity, and His shameful suffering and death on the cross for the redemption of the human race. Our Lord also chose this term to characterize the activity of His followers in obedience to His commands and mission. He called all members of His body to a general or corporate ministry which would glorify Him, edify the church and evangelize the world. And He made such possible through imparting to each believer one or more gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12:7-27) in order that each member might participate in the work of the ministry and contribute to the growth and development of the whole body (Eph. 4:11-16).

B. Qualifications and Call of the Specialized Minister

3003. While God, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, assigns to each believer a part in the general or corporate ministry of the church, He also calls some to a specialized or representative type of ministry. As Christ called unto Him whom He would, chose and ordained His twelve apostles “that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach” (Mark 3:14), so He still calls and sends forth His messengers to be servants of the servants who make up the whole church. And as the Holy Spirit impresses this call upon the individual involved, He also confirms the call through the Church. It is the responsibility of the Church both to recognize and endorse God’s call, providing for the training and employment of those He selects, and to respect the office of the specialized ministry by refusing its exercise to those not called of God. The Church’s endorsement may be limited to a probationary period,

taking the form of a license, or it may be granted on a more permanent basis, taking the form of commissioning or ordination.

3006. The Wesleyan Church believes that four marks will concur in the person whom God has called: grace, gifts, fruit and an abiding sense of a divine call. All candidates for ministerial license, commission or ordination shall be examined concerning each of these marks:

(1) As to grace, are they converted? are they entirely sanctified? are they manifesting the fruit of the Spirit? are they worthy examples to the church and to the world?

(2) As to gifts, are they able to think clearly? to understand and communicate clearly matters related to salvation? to speak persuasively? to practice loving care? to provide leadership?

(3) As to fruit, have any been truly convicted of sin and converted to God through their ministry? and have believers been edified?

(4) As to an abiding sense of a divine call, can they testify to a continuing and increasing conviction that they have been chosen by God for a specialized and representative ministry?

3012. Any person sustaining a marriage relation contrary to the Scriptures and the Covenant Membership Commitments (265:5; 410:6; 3108; 5251) shall be ineligible for licensing, commissioning or ordination in The Wesleyan Church.

C. Ministerial Student

3015. Those pursuing ministerial studies under the direction of the district board of ministerial development shall include those licensed as ministerial students as follows:

(1) **Ministerial Student.** A covenant member of The Wesleyan Church who confesses a call to be a minister (cf. 3000-3006) may be granted a license as a ministerial student by meeting the following requirements in order:

(a) Membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting the license.

(b) Recommendation from the local church conference or the local board of administration (655:8) to the district conference for license as a ministerial student.

(c) Readiness to pursue studies with all diligence until completed, to prepare for ordination, and to give oneself wholly to the ministry in The Wesleyan Church when studies are completed.

(d) Examination by the district board of ministerial development

(1390:2) relative to qualifications for ministry (cf. 3000-3006) including a personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof, and its recommendation to the district conference for the granting of the license (1390:5).

(e) Enrollment in the Ministerial Study Course Agency and in a program of ministerial education approved by the district board of ministerial development.

(f) Recommendation by the district board of administration for appointment as a ministerial student (3350:2) and its adoption by the district conference (1180:26c; 1233:9c; 1390:2).

(g) Issuance and signing of the license by the district superintendent and the district secretary (6260).

(2) **Renewing a License for a Ministerial Student.** The license for a ministerial student may be renewed annually by meeting the following requirements:

(a) The reports from both the ministerial student and the Ministerial Study Course Agency show that progress has been made in the course of study.

(b) The ministerial student shows readiness to continue studies in preparation for ordination in The Wesleyan Church (3350:2) or, for one having just completed the course of study, to take an appointment within the coming year.

(c) The proper reports have been made (3015:4).

(3) **Rights of a Ministerial Student.** As long as a ministerial student qualifies for and receives a license the student shall have the right:

(a) To preach the gospel.

(b) To be a nonvoting member of the district conference (1090:4).

(c) To transfer from one district to another (3015:5d); the district superintendent shall send a letter directly to the district superintendent of the district to which the student is transferring and the student shall continue to be considered a member of the former district until a reply has been received from the latter district that the student has been duly received as a member of a local church within the district and has been duly enrolled as a ministerial student by the district.

(d) To have recourse, even if under discipline, to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters involving complaint against character or ministerial conduct and to appeal the decision of such a court (302:4; 313:7; 5200; 5206-5212).

(4) **Duties of a Ministerial Student.** A person holding a license as a ministerial student shall be responsible to report annually to the district board of ministerial development concerning progress in studies (1390:2) and service (1390:7); and to report to the district superintendent and the board of ministerial development at other times as required.

(5) **Regulations for a Ministerial Student.**

(a) A ministerial student is amenable to the district which grants the license, and the license may be revoked between sessions of the district conference by judicial process as set forth in 5206-5212.

(b) A ministerial student's credentials shall consist of the license, signed annually by the district superintendent and the district secretary (6260), and an annual pocket certificate of standing, issued and signed by the district secretary (6430).

(c) A ministerial student from another denomination will need to qualify for such license in The Wesleyan Church as set forth in 3015:1.

(d) A ministerial student, when transferring district membership (cf. 3015:3c; 3100:1), in addition to a letter of transfer, shall be supplied by the district superintendent and the district board of ministerial development with a properly attested statement of standing in the ministerial study course.

D. Licensed Minister

3030. Identification. A licensed minister is one whose ministerial calling and gifts have been formally recognized by a district conference, through the granting of a ministerial license which serves as authorization for and appointment to actual service in the ministry, subject to supervision and evaluation, as a step toward ordination. A licensed minister may be a former ministerial student who has qualified for and been appointed to regular service in one of the categories listed in 3250-3345.

3033. Granting a District Ministerial License. A covenant member of The Wesleyan Church who confesses a call of God to be a minister (cf. 3000-3006), may be granted a district ministerial license by meeting the following requirements in order:

(1) Membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting the license.

(2) Satisfactory service as a ministerial student in The Wesleyan Church for at least one year.

(3) Certificate from the Ministerial Study Course Agency showing

completion of the courses adopted as being prerequisites for licensing (6410; cf. 3170:1-4; 3210).

(4) Recommendation from the local church conference to the district conference for a district ministerial license (655:8).

(5) Readiness to accept the district conference's appointment to active service in one of the categories listed in 3250-3335; to pursue the studies with all diligence until completed; to prepare for ordination; and to give oneself wholly to the ministry.

(6) Examination by the district board of ministerial development (1390:1) relative to the qualifications for the ministry and for a district ministerial license (cf. 3000-3006; 3033:1-5), including a personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof, matters of education, doctrine and practice, and circumstances of personal, family and business life which bear upon the ministry; and subsequent recommendation by the district board of ministerial development to the district conference for the granting of a district ministerial license (1390:5).

(7) Recommendation by the district board of administration for immediate appointment to one of the categories of service listed in 3250-3335.

(8) Adoption by the district conference of the separate recommendations of the district board of ministerial development (3033:6) and of the district board of administration (3033:7).

(9) Issuance and signing of the license by the district superintendent and the district secretary (6260; cf. 1310:23; 1332:4).

3040. Renewing a District Ministerial License. A district ministerial license is effective for one year only, and authority to carry on the office and work of a minister under such a license shall cease unless it is renewed annually by the district conference until such time as the holder of the license is commissioned or ordained to the ministry. A minister may be granted renewal of the ministerial license by meeting the following requirements:

(1) Satisfactory service under a previous appointment, including loyalty to and compliance with the rules of The Wesleyan Church and of the district, and including the proper filing of reports. If a licensed minister fails to file the annual service report (1402), unless such failure is due to illness, injury or a similar emergency, the license shall not be renewed (cf. 1390:8).

(2) Confirmation through the annual report of the Ministerial Study Course Agency that the minister has completed at least two courses in the pre-ordination study course (3210:1). The pre-ordination study course must be completed within seven years of service under a ministerial license. The

ministerial license shall not be renewed beyond the seventh year (cf. 3059).

(3) Agreement to continue under district appointment to one of the categories of service listed in 3250-3335 or for one having completed the course of study for ordination, to take an appointment, within the coming conference year.

3044. Rights of Licensed Minister. As long as a minister qualifies for and receives a district ministerial license, the minister shall have the right (cf. 313):

(1) To preach the gospel (313:1), and, when appointed as a pastor or full-time associate or assistant pastor of a Wesleyan church, to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper, to perform all parts of divine worship, and to solemnize the rite of matrimony wherever local laws will permit.

(2) To contract the pastoral relationship with local Wesleyan churches subject to the approval of the district conference and other regulations of *The Discipline* (313:3; 323:1-2).

(3) To enjoy, if appointed as a pastor, the use for religious meetings of the church building or buildings of the pastoral charge to which assigned by the district conference (313:4); and to serve the assigned pastoral charge without interference by unauthorized activities of another minister of The Wesleyan Church (313:5; cf. 3114-3117).

(4) To be a voting member of the district conference if an ordained minister-elect or if the pastor or a full-time associate/assistant pastor of a Wesleyan church in that district (317; 1083:2-4). To be a nonvoting member if otherwise classified or appointed (1090:3). To be eligible for election to any office not restricted to ordained ministers or lay persons.

(5) To transfer in the manner prescribed by *The Discipline* from one district to another, subject to the concurrence of the district superintendent and the General Superintendent over the district into which transfer is sought (313:6; cf. 3055:3; 3097; 3100:1).

(6) To have recourse, even if under discipline, to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters involving complaint against character or ministerial conduct and to appeal the decision of such court (313:7; 5200; 5206-5212).

3051. Duties of a Licensed Minister. A person holding a district ministerial license shall be responsible:

(1) To enroll in the pre-ordination study course (3210:1) under the Ministerial Study Course Agency and the district board of ministerial development, and to pursue the study course with all diligence until completed, either through a program of ministerial training at one of the

Wesleyan educational institutions, or through correspondence courses from the Ministerial Study Course Agency (cf. 3200).

(2) To serve the district faithfully under whatever appointment is received, seeking to complete the service requirements for ordination as quickly as possible.

(3) To report annually to the district conference on the appropriate service report form (cf. 1402; 3040:1), and to the district superintendent and the board of ministerial development as required (cf. 725:32).

3055. Regulations for a Licensed Minister.

(1) A licensed minister is amenable to the district which grants the license, and the license may be revoked between sessions of the district conference by judicial process as set forth in 5206-5212.

(2) A licensed minister's credentials shall consist of the license, signed annually by the district superintendent and the district secretary (3033:9; 6260), and an annual pocket certificate of standing, issued and signed by the district secretary (6430).

(3) A licensed minister, when transferring district membership (cf. 3100:1), in addition to a letter of transfer, shall be supplied by the district superintendent and the district board of ministerial development with a properly attested statement of standing in the pre-ordination study course and a record of service under the appointment of the district conference.

E. Commissioned Minister

3059. Identification. A commissioned minister is one who may have demonstrated calling, gifts and usefulness, who has responded to the call to ministry, yet after counsel with and agreement by the district board of ministerial development, has chosen not to pursue full ministerial development as an ordained minister, and has been separated to the service of Christ by the vote of a district conference and by a commissioning service and thus has been invested with those functions of the Christian ministry essential to this level of service. The commissioned minister shall be subject to the following regulations:

(1) **Qualifications for Commissioning.** A licensed minister of The Wesleyan Church who has an abiding conviction of God's call to be a minister (cf. 3000-3006) may be commissioned as a minister by meeting the following requirements in order:

(a) Forty years of age or older at the time of receiving a license as a ministerial student or a person who because of aptitude or other extenuating circumstances is approved by the district board of administration.

(b) Satisfactory service as a licensed minister with appointment by the district for a minimum of two years.

(c) Certification from the Ministerial Study Course Agency that the commissioned minister's course of study or its equivalent has been completed (3210:3). The commissioned minister's course of study must be completed within six years of service under a ministerial license. The ministerial license shall not be renewed beyond the sixth year.

(d) Recommendation of the district board of ministerial development after consultation with the district board of administration (cf. 3059:1).

(e) Election by the district conference by a majority vote to a commissioned minister's status (1180:28, 29).

(f) Public service of commissioning (5800), in which the minister shall witness to a Christian experience, conviction of a divine call to the ministry, commitment to the doctrines and practices of The Wesleyan Church, and loyalty to The Wesleyan Church, after which the minister shall be separated to the Christian ministry through the laying on of hands in the person of the General Superintendent (if present, cf. 1935:15), or the representative appointed by the General Superintendent (1935:15; 3091); the district superintendent (1310:23) and a Council of Ordination (1405).

(g) Issuance and signing of a commission certificate by the General Superintendent over the district, the district superintendent and the district secretary (6280).

(2) **Rights of a Commissioned Minister.** As long as a commissioned minister maintains spiritual life, moral character and faithful ministry, and is neither under discipline nor expelled from the ministry, the minister shall have the right (313):

(a) To preach the gospel and to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper, to perform all parts of divine worship, and to solemnize the rite of matrimony wherever local laws will permit (313:1).

(b) To be eligible for election to any office not restricted to ordained ministers or lay persons. The commissioned minister shall not be eligible for election as district superintendent, assistant district superintendent, member-at-large on the district board of administration, member of the district board of ministerial development, nor as a delegate to General Conference.

(c) To contract the pastoral relationship with local Wesleyan churches subject to the approval of the district conference and other regulations of *The Discipline* (313:3; 323:1-2).

(d) To enjoy, if appointed as a pastor, the use for religious

meetings of the church building or buildings of the pastoral charge to which appointed by the district conference (313:4); and to serve the pastoral charge without interference by unauthorized activities of another minister of The Wesleyan Church (313:5; cf. 3114-3117).

(e) To be a voting member of the district conference if pastoring a Wesleyan church or serving as a full-time associate or assistant pastor of a Wesleyan church (317; 1083:3), or a nonvoting member of the district conference if appointed to some other category of service or in the process of transfer (317; 1090:3).

(f) To transfer in the manner prescribed by *The Discipline* from one district to another, subject to the concurrence of the district superintendent over the district into which transfer is sought (313:6; 3097; 3100:1).

(g) To have recourse, even if under discipline, to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters involving complaint against character or ministerial conduct and to appeal the decision of such court (313:7; 5200; 5206-5212).

(3) Duties of a Commissioned Minister. A commissioned minister shall be responsible:

(a) To be devoted without reservation to the Christian ministry, following the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the appointment of the district conference in determining and occupying the field of service.

(b) To report annually to the district conference on the appropriate service report form (cf. 1402; 3059:4c), and to the district superintendent as required (cf. 725:32).

(c) To voluntarily file all credentials with the district superintendent if service in one of the categories of ministry listed in 3250-3335 ceases for four or more consecutive years (cf. 3124); this does not apply to those listed under 3370-3371.

(d) To voluntarily surrender credentials if guilty of an offense which would disqualify from service as a commissioned minister (cf. 5230; 5233-5236).

(4) Regulations for a Commissioned Minister.

(a) A commissioned minister is amenable to the district where membership is held, and may be deposed from the ministry and ordered to surrender credentials by judicial process as set forth in 5206-5212.

(b) A commissioned minister's credentials shall consist of the commission certificate (6280) and an annual pocket certificate of standing, issued and signed by the district secretary (6430).

(c) A commissioned minister who fails to file the annual service report (1402) for two successive years, shall be notified by the district board of ministerial development, and requested to report at the next session of the district conference. One who then fails to report shall be declared withdrawn from the district, and this person's name shall be so entered upon the minutes of the district conference.

(d) When a commissioned minister surrenders the commission certificate after acknowledging guilt for an offense (3059:3d), or is ordered to surrender it after due judicial process (5212:4), it shall be lawful to publish such fact in the official church publication.

F. Ordained Minister

3067. Identification. An ordained minister is a minister whose calling, gifts and usefulness have been demonstrated and enhanced by proper training and experience, and who has been separated to the service of Christ by the vote of a district conference and by the solemn act of ordination (5750-5792), and thus has been fully invested with all the functions of the Christian ministry.

3070. Qualifications for Ordination. A licensed minister of The Wesleyan Church who has an abiding conviction of God's call to be a minister (cf. 3000-3006) may be ordained by meeting the following requirements in order:

(1) Covenant membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting ordination.

(2) Satisfactory service for two years subsequent to completion of the pre-ordination study course, except for those who have been under appointment and supervision during the years spent completing said course of study. This service must be full-time (as determined by the district board of ministerial development) in one of the categories of service listed in 3250-3335. At least one year must have been in The Wesleyan Church within the district in which ordination is to take place except as hereinafter provided. In case of a ministerial student graduating from a three-year divinity course at an approved seminary the service requirement is for one year. If ordination is to be in a district other than the one in which the service requirement was met, the district board of ministerial development of the appointing district must recommend the student to the ordaining district.

(3) Certificate from the Ministerial Study Course Agency showing completion of the pre-ordination course of study or of its equivalent (6410; cf. 3170:4; 3210:1).

(4) Examination by the district board of ministerial development relative to qualifications for the ministry and for ordination (cf. 3000-3006; 3070:1-3), including a personal religious experience, ministerial call and evidence thereof, matters of education, doctrine and practice, particularly a personal commitment without reservation to each of the Articles of Religion and the Membership Commitments and loyalty to The Wesleyan Church, and circumstances of personal, family and business life which bear upon the ministry; and a subsequent report by the district board of ministerial development to the district conference (1390:1, 5).

(5) Election by the district conference to ordained minister's orders (1180:28). In case of an emergency, a candidate who has been recommended by the district board of ministerial development may be elected to ordained minister's orders by the district board of administration in the interim of the sessions of the district conference (1233:37).

(6) Public service of ordination (3091; 5750-5792), in which the minister shall witness to a Christian experience, affirm conviction of a divine call to the ministry, commitment to the doctrines and principles of The Wesleyan Church, and loyalty to The Wesleyan Church, after which the minister shall be separated to the Christian ministry by the Church through the laying on of hands in the person of the General Superintendent (if present, cf. 1935:15), or the representative appointed by the General Superintendent (1935:15; 3091), the district superintendent (1310:23) and a council of ordination (1405).

(7) Issuance and signing of a certificate of ordination by the General Superintendent, district superintendent and district secretary (6300).

(8) The Board of General Superintendents, by unanimous vote and after consultation with the district board of ministerial development of the involved district, may postpone the intended ordination of any candidate and/or refer the same to the district board of ministerial development for further consideration.

3075. Rights of an Ordained Minister. An ordained minister who maintains spiritual life, moral character and faithful ministry, and is neither under discipline nor expelled from the ministry shall have the right (cf. 313):

(1) To preach the gospel and to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper, to perform all parts of divine worship and to solemnize the rite of matrimony (313:1).

(2) To be eligible for election to any office in the Church for which ordained ministers are eligible (313:2).

(3) To contract the pastoral relationship with local Wesleyan churches subject to the other provisions of *The Discipline* (313:3).

(4) To enjoy, if appointed as a pastor, the use for religious meetings of the church building or buildings of the pastoral charge to which assigned by the district conference (313:4); and to serve the assigned pastoral charge without interference by unauthorized activities of another minister of The Wesleyan Church (313:5; cf. 3114-3117).

(5) To be a voting member of the district conference if under appointment, retired, on reserve, on educational leave or a member of the district board of administration (317; 1083:1; 1240:1:A-D) and a nonvoting member if without appointment or in the process of transfer (1090:1-2); and to have these conference relations changed only after careful investigation by the district board of administration, and interview if possible (1233:9c).

(6) To transfer in the manner prescribed by *The Discipline* from one district to another, subject to the concurrence of the district superintendent over the district into which transfer is sought (313:6; cf. 3100:1).

(7) To have recourse, even if under discipline, to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters involving complaint against character or ministerial conduct and to appeal the decision of such court (313:7; 5200; 5206-5212).

3085. Duties of an Ordained Minister. An ordained minister shall be responsible:

(1) To be devoted without reservation to the Christian ministry, following the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the appointment of the district conference in determining and occupying a field of service.

(2) To report annually to the district conference on the appropriate service report form (cf. 1402; 3089:3), and to the district superintendent as required (cf. 725:32).

(3) To voluntarily file all credentials with the district superintendent if service in one of the categories of ministry listed in 3250-3346 ceases for four or more consecutive years (cf. 3124); this does not apply to those given other ministerial listings set forth in 3350:1; 3360; 3370.

(4) To voluntarily surrender credentials if guilty of an offense which would disqualify one for service as an ordained minister (cf. 5212; 5230-5251).

3089. Regulations for an Ordained Minister.

(1) An ordained minister is amenable to the district where membership is held, and may be deposed from the ministry and ordered to surrender credentials by judicial process as set forth in 5206-5212.

(2) An ordained minister's credentials shall consist of the certificate of ordination (3070:7; 6300), and an annual pocket certificate of standing, issued and signed by the district secretary (6430).

(3) An ordained minister who fails to file the annual service report (1402) for two successive years, shall be notified by the district board of ministerial development, and requested to report at the next session of the district conference. If no report is filed at that time the district shall declare the minister withdrawn and shall record the action upon the minutes of the district conference.

(4) When an ordained minister surrenders the certificate of ordination because guilty of an offense (3085:4), or is ordered to surrender it after due judicial process (5212:4), it shall be lawful to publish such fact in the columns of the official church publication.

3091. Ordination Service. The public service of ordination shall be presided over by the General Superintendent or a representative appointed by the General Superintendent. The service shall be planned by the district superintendent and the Council of Ordination; the time and place shall be subject to the approval of the General Superintendent. The General Superintendent shall deliver the ordination sermon except when delegating that responsibility to another. The rituals of commissioning ministers, special workers, and lay missionaries may be blended with the ordination service or may be conducted separately. The laying on of hands shall be by the General Superintendent (or the representative appointed by the General Superintendent), the district superintendent, the Council of Ordination and such other ministers as they shall invite.

G. General Regulations for Ordained Ministers and Commissioned or Licensed Ministers

1. Special Advice to Ministers

3093. John Wesley's "Rules of a Helper" have perhaps never been excelled as counsel to ministers, whether young or old. These "Rules" are, in part, as follows:

(1) Be diligent. Never be unemployed a moment, never be triflingly employed, never while away time; spend no more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

(2) Be serious. Let your motto be, "Holiness unto the Lord." Avoid all lightness, jesting and foolish talking.

(3) Believe evil of no one without good evidence; unless you see it done, take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction on everything. The judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.

(4) Speak evil of no one, else your word especially would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast till you come to the person concerned.

(5) Tell every one under your care what you think wrong in his conduct and temper, and that lovingly and plainly as soon as may be: else it will fester in your heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

(6) Avoid all affectation. A preacher of the gospel is the servant of all.

(7) Be ashamed of nothing but sin. Let your industry, as well as your humility, commend itself to all.

(8) Be punctual: do everything exactly at the time.

(9) Do not mend the rules, but keep them; not for wrath but for conscience' sake.

(10) You have nothing to do but to save souls; therefore spend and be spent in this work; and go always not only to those that desire you, but to those who need you most.

2. Membership of Ministers

3097. Local Church Membership. Each Wesleyan minister, whether ordained, commissioned or licensed, must be a covenant member of a local Wesleyan church (310). If serving as a pastor, membership is automatically transferred to the church of service (578:2). If serving in some capacity other than that of a pastor, the holding and transfer of local church membership shall occur in the same manner as a lay member. A commissioned or licensed minister must be a covenant member of a local Wesleyan church within the district where appointed or licensed. An ordained minister may be a covenant member of a local Wesleyan church outside the district where ministerial membership is held except when regulations governing a particular appointment or office prohibit such (cf. 578:2; 1258; 1278). In recognition of the undesigned but inherent potential to create divided loyalties or undermine the strengths of new pastoral leadership, ministers should be discouraged from remaining in the congregation or community immediately following pastoral service in that place. If a minister leaves a pastoral assignment to accept appointment to another service category or to begin retirement and, for such reason as a prior home purchase and/or no other Wesleyan church in the community, feels it necessary to retain membership and worship in the church where pastoral leadership was just terminated, it is recommended that said former pastor shall not accept appointment to the local board of administration (cf. 755).

3100. District Membership. An ordained or commissioned minister shall be a member of the district where appointed to service (cf. 3059:4), and each licensed minister a member of the district which issues the license (cf. 3015:3b; 3044:4; 3075:5). The ordained, commissioned, or licensed minister's district membership shall be subject to the following regulations:

(1) If a minister desires to accept a pastoral call from a church within the bounds of another district, or if a minister not serving as a pastor desires to transfer ministerial membership to another district, the minister must first obtain the written permission of the General Superintendent and the district superintendent over the district into which transfer is desired (313:6; 1310:18). When such has been obtained, the minister shall ask the district superintendent for a letter of transfer (6440; cf. 1310:25) to be sent directly to the district superintendent of the district into which transfer is desired (cf. 3055:3). The minister shall continue to be considered as a member of the former district until a reply has been received from the district to which application has been made stating that the minister has been duly enrolled as a member of the district conference (6450; cf. 1310:25). To avoid dual listings, ministers receiving appointment by the receiving district conference prior to completion of enrollment shall be listed in that district conference journal as an ordained, commissioned or licensed minister Pending Completion of District Transfer (1240:I:F; 1240:II:D; 1240:III:C).

(2) In an emergency, an ordained minister may serve as supply pastor of a church located within the bounds of a district other than the one in which ministerial membership is held (cf. 3260:1), provided that such an arrangement has the written approval of the superintendent of each district involved (1310:25), and does not continue beyond the next session of the district conference in which membership is held without the consent of the district conference.

(3) If a minister so requests, the district superintendent may grant a letter of standing (6460; cf. 1310:25), which shall immediately terminate ministerial membership in The Wesleyan Church (cf. 3126). Such a letter of standing shall be valid for one year from the date of issuance in the case of an ordained minister, or until the next session of the district conference from which withdrawn in the case of a commissioned or licensed minister.

(4) If a minister joins another denomination or, in writing, declares withdrawal from the Church, said action shall immediately terminate ministerial membership in The Wesleyan Church (cf. 3124), upon recommendation of the district superintendent to the district board of administration.

(5) If a minister leaves for parts unknown or fails to submit the annual service report (1402; 3059:4c; 3089:3), the district board of administration may recommend and the district conference may order that the minister be declared withdrawn (cf. 3040; 3120; 3124).

(6) No letters of transfer or standing shall be granted to any minister by a district superintendent until satisfactory evidence is given by the applicant that no outstanding debts are unprovided for, and that the minister has honorably withdrawn from the contract for service with the church or district.

3. Reception of Ministers from Another Denomination

3104. Reception of a Minister from Another Denomination. An ordained minister from another denomination, or a minister from another denomination who has been ordained to deacon's orders or who has been licensed or authorized in some manner equivalent to the commissioning or licensing of a Wesleyan minister by a district conference, may seek reception into The Wesleyan Church as an ordained minister or commissioned or licensed minister, as the case may justify (1233:36) according to the following procedure:

(1) The applicant shall present a letter of standing or photocopy of ministerial credentials and photocopies of transcripts or other records of ministerial training to the district superintendent (1310:25). If the district superintendent is favorable to initiating steps which might lead to the applicant's transfer, the superintendent shall forward copies of these documents to the Ministerial Study Course Agency.

(2) Space reserved.

(3) The applicant shall be examined by the district board of ministerial development relative to Christian experience, call and qualifications for the ministry as given in 3000-3006 (cf. 3059:1; 3070:4), and to the nature of ordination, commission or license.

(4) If the district board of ministerial development so recommends (1390:3), the district conference may appoint the applicant as an ordained minister in process of transfer (1180:29a; cf. 1240:I:G; 3390; cf. 3067), a commissioned minister in process of transfer (1240:II:E; 3059; 3391) or a licensed minister in process of transfer (1240:III:D; 3391), which relation shall continue for one year unless the district conference shall by vote extend it. While serving under this relation, the applicant is a nonvoting member of the district conference (1090:2, 3), may serve as a supply pastor (3260),

and shall seek to satisfy any requirements in ministerial training, particularly in Wesleyan doctrine, history and polity. If at any time the district board of administration shall determine that it is not in the best interests of the district to continue the relation, they may by majority vote terminate the relation and any supply assignment, and thus dismiss the applicant from all ministerial relations to The Wesleyan Church. An ordained minister in the process of transfer shall have authority to administer the sacraments and perform marriages, while serving as a supply pastor (3260:2).

(5) If the year of service is satisfactory and all requirements in ministerial training have been met as evidenced by the certification of the Ministerial Study Course Agency, the district board of ministerial development may recommend to the district conference that the applicant be recognized as an ordained minister or commissioned or licensed minister of The Wesleyan Church and be received as a ministerial member of the district (1390:3). If the transferring minister has not previously joined a local Wesleyan church within the district, this must be done prior to the vote by the district conference receiving the applicant as a ministerial member of the district. If an ordained minister in process of transfer faces extensive additional academic requirements, and age or other extenuating circumstances make it doubtful to the applicant and the district board of ministerial development that such requirements can be met, the district board of ministerial development may authorize the applicant to qualify for commissioned minister's status and proceed accordingly (cf. 3059).

(6) When an ordained minister or commissioned minister has been received, a proper certificate validating the ordination or commission shall be signed and issued (6320). For the licensed minister, a license shall be issued (6260).

4. Minister and Marriage

3108. Any minister who enters into a marriage relation contrary to the Scriptures, and to those expositions of Scripture as set forth in the Covenant Membership Commitments (265:5; cf. 410:6), after having been ordained, commissioned or licensed, shall be dismissed from ministerial standing, provided that guilt shall be established in accord with the judicial processes set forth in *The Discipline* (5206-5212).

3111. In performing marriages, Wesleyan ministers shall not unite in marriage any person who is divorced, unless such divorce and remarriage is in keeping with the Scriptures and the Covenant Membership Commitments

(265:5). In carrying out this duty, the minister shall be guided by the principles set forth in 410:6.

3112. In performing marriages, Wesleyan ministers shall not unite in marriage persons of the same sex.

5. Relationship to Other Ministers and Churches

3114. Each minister of The Wesleyan Church shall respect the rights of each other minister within the field of labor, and shall not interfere with the work of, nor influence anyone against any pastor, district official or other minister of The Wesleyan Church (cf. 313:5). In the event of any such violation of ministerial ethics, the aggrieved person may file a complaint with the district superintendent (5004:2, 4; 5206).

3117. If a Wesleyan minister shall engage to serve another denomination, or an interdenominational or independent work, as a pastor or in some other regular capacity, except by permission of the district conference, or in the interim of its sessions, by permission of the district board of administration, the district board of administration may recommend and the district conference may order that the minister be declared withdrawn. If serving within the territory of a district other than the one to which the minister belongs, the minister must have not only the permission of the district in which membership is held, but also the permission of the district superintendent over the territory where labor is proposed (1310:25). An ordained minister serving outside The Wesleyan Church with the permission of the district in which membership is held shall be placed either on the appointed list in the category of interchurch service (3335) or special service (3345) or listed as an ordained minister without appointment (3380).

6. Reinstatement of Ministers

3120. If a licensed minister or ministerial student ceases to be licensed or is declared withdrawn from the district conference, and was neither under charges nor under discipline, the minister may at a later time again be recommended by the local church conference and qualify for and be granted a district license.

3124. An ordained minister or commissioned minister who has voluntarily filed credentials with the district superintendent (3059:3c; 3085:3), or who has taken a letter of standing and has not used the same within the prescribed time (3100:3), or who has been declared withdrawn

when neither under charges nor under discipline (cf. 3059:4c; 3089:3; 3100:4; 3117; 5380), may be reinstated in the office of an ordained minister or commissioned minister in The Wesleyan Church, if such is approved by the district board of ministerial development and district board of administration of the district in which ministerial membership is sought, and if such reinstatement is approved by the area General Superintendent.