



Pastoral Ordination Process

2017-2018 EDITION

These resources are intended for District Exam Board Leaders and Mentors to **Equip** and **Evaluate** men for Pastoral Ordination.

Pastoral Ordination Process

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Formerly named *The Association of Grace Brethren Ministers*, **INSPIRE** grew out of the Progressive Brethren movement. The 1894 Brethren Annual contains the written record of a meeting held the year before to organize the national Brethren Ministerial Association. The minutes for this meeting contain a complete constitution and a course of study for ministers.

By 1939, the organization went by the name of *The National Ministerial Association of the Brethren Church*. That year, the Brethren church had a split, and ministers reorganized themselves as the National Fellowship of Brethren Ministers. It was the Association's 45th annual meeting.

The ministers revised their constitution in 1974 to reflect the addition of the word Grace to its name, clearly indicating its cooperation with the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches. In 1999, they changed the name to the *Association of Grace Brethren Ministers*.

In 2017-18, the *Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches* updated their statement of faith to what is called the *Identity Statement* and rebranded as *Charis Fellowship*. In harmony with our Fellowship, **INSPIRE** updated the National Ordination Exam and Process to reflect the *Identity Statement* and rebranded as **INSPIRE – Charis Pastors Network**. Today, more than 400 licensed and ordained ministers belong to **INSPIRE**. They offer themselves for service to Charis Fellowship churches all over the world.

WHAT IS THE DISTRICT EXAMINATION BOARD?

Charis Fellowship is comprised of local churches who share a common purpose centered on similar beliefs and practices. Our movement is summarized by a commitment to Biblical Truth, Biblical Relationships and Biblical Mission. Since we have churches in many parts of the United States, we are also organized in geographical regions that we call districts. This enables us to maintain regular contact with other churches and provide a working structure for us to carry out our overall purposes.

Since we are a fellowship and not a denomination, we place a high value on the local church and its autonomy. However, our districts can provide services to the local church to help them carry out their mission. A very important service that a district can provide is to aid the local church in the process of affirming a man's call to the ministry. Our means to this end is the *District Examination Board*. Its work provides a protection for a local church and is a way to ensure that within our fellowship we are walking with as much agreement and unity as we can and should.

Typically, most people only think of theology when they think of an examination board. Those ultimately recommended for ordination must demonstrate a clear understanding of Scripture, the Gospel, theology and doctrine. However, our process will also include a way to assess their ministerial skill, personal and ministry relationships, their understanding of the church and its mission and their Christian character. We

believe a person who has been ordained should be very balanced in his Christian life and ministry.

This process is not meant to be threatening to any man that God has called into ministry. We believe though that a call of God into Christian ministry is a high and holy calling. Our main goal is to be helpful and encouraging so a man can effectively carry out this great responsibility. (James 3:1)

Contacting Your District Examination Board Chairman

Allegheny: Randy Haulk – (814) 634-0355

prhaulk@juno.com

Artic: Chris Ball – (907) 333-2484

sermonater@aol.com

Blue Ridge:

Chesapeake: Jack Hunt – (204) 235-6599

jack.hunt@clintorace.org

Florida: Rich Schnieders – (239) 281-8847

rich.schnieders@gmail.com

Hawaii: Ted Kirnbauer (808) 671-6166

pastorted@gracefellowshiphawaii.org

Heartland: Larry Richeson (765) 438-9477

ihgbc@att.net

Iowa-Midlands:

Mid-Atlantic: Carl Baker (304) 263-2272

pastorcarl77@hotmail.com

Mountain Plains:

Nor-Cal:

Northcentral Ohio: Gary Webb (614) 839-6815

gary.webb@gracepolaris.org

Northeastern Ohio: Joe Cosentino (330) 499-3818

pastorjoe@cantongbc.org

Northern Atlantic:

Northwest Ohio:

Pacific Northwest: Greg Howell (509) 261-0850

ghowell@fgbc.org

Southern:

So-Cal: Terry Daniels (626) 799-0086

sopasgbc@juno.com

Tri-State: Danny Wright (937) 547-0065

danny@greenvillegrace.org

West Penn: Rod Lingenfelter (814) 931-5552

rlwwjd@aol.com

IF YOUR DISTRICT DOES NOT HAVE A FUNCTIONING MINISTERIUM – Please contact INSPIRE to help coordinate a mentor and an examination plan.

Contacting INSPIRE

Mark Lingenfelter, President

14 Brethren Lane, Duncansville, PA 16635

Gracefc@atlanticbb.net

(814) 515-3821

PASTORAL SEARCH TEAM TOOLS

The local church has the responsibility for choosing its Pastor and staff. However, without proper tools for evaluating a man's theological understanding, doctrinal convictions, ministerial skills, personal life, matters of integrity and an understanding of the mission of the church – a local church may cause harm to itself, the community, our Fellowship and the name of Jesus Christ. We recommend that a local church request help **BEFORE** hiring a pastor to provide clarity on the type of pastor it should be looking for. It is very difficult if the District Examination Board is asked to evaluate qualifications after a man has already been hired.

The **Ordination Application Form**, **Personal Reference Form** and the **First Look at Charis Identity** (included in this packet) will help you evaluate a man's theological understanding, doctrinal convictions, ministerial skills, personal life, matters of integrity and an understanding of the mission of the church. **We recommend that you send these Forms to the District Examination Board for review before either hiring or commissioning a man to Pastoral ministry.** Additionally, familiarity with the Application process will give you a clear picture of the things that we think are important when considering your pastor.

Feel free to contact the **Charis Fellowship Coordinator** (Tom Avey – tomavey@charisfellowship.us) to request a pastoral vacancy be posted on the Fellowship Website. You are also encouraged to contact the District Examination Chairman or INSPIRE president for additional help in evaluating a potential Pastor.

PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW OF PASTORAL ORDINATION EXAMINATION PROCESS

The **PURPOSE** of the Pastoral Examination Process (provided by the district examination board or INSPIRE) is to aid and protect local churches by assessing theological understanding, doctrinal convictions, ministerial skills, personal life & integrity and an understanding of the mission of the church.

OVERVIEW OF EXAMINATION PROCESS

STEP 1 – Application

The **LOCAL CHURCH** has the authority and responsibility to hire and ordain pastors for ministry. The candidate completes the **Application** as a way for the local church leadership to evaluate his theological understanding, doctrinal convictions, ministerial skills, personal life & integrity. It is recommended that a local church considering hiring a pastor use this application and send it to the district exam board for a recommendation.

This application is also used to formally request entrance into the Pastoral Ordination Process. The Application should be sent to their District Examination Board Chairman (or to the INSPIRE president if no District Examination Board exists). The entire Pastoral Ordination Process is dependent on where the candidate is in his ministry experience (see page 8). The maximum time allotted should not exceed 3 years.

STEP 2 – Recognition

The **LOCAL CHURCH** has the authority and responsibility to ordain pastors for ministry. After the candidate completes the Application and is affirmed by the Local Church Elders (and preferably the District Exam Board) the local church officially recognizes the candidate as a man who has demonstrated sound character, ministerial gifting and calling into the pastoral ministry. This official action by the local church is to be considered a **Commissioning to Pastoral Ministry** (qualifying for clergy status as defined by the IRS) and is valid only in the commissioning local church until the Ordination Process has been completed.

STEP 3 – Preparation (Mentorship)

Upon receipt of the **Application** and **Local Church Recognition Form**, the District Examination Board will determine the proper entry point into the Ordination Process for the candidate based on level of experience and Biblical training. Each candidate will be expected to be connected to a mentor to help him prepare for the written and oral exam, and will be responsible to evaluate his life and ministry skills using Charis Beliefs 1 & 2. Each district will determine the best possible way to achieve this goal.

STEP 4 – Examination

Candidates who have not previously demonstrated mastery of Biblical understanding of theology and doctrine will complete the **National Written Examination**. The candidate will then complete an **Oral Examination** with the District Examination Board. The purpose of this examination is to clarify any inadequate or insufficient answers from the written exam.

STEP 5 – Recommendation

After a satisfactory Written Exam, Oral Exam and Mentor Recommendation of Life, Ministry and Integrity, a Recommendation will be made to the local church to proceed with Ordination. The **LOCAL CHURCH** is then expected to plan an ordination service and formally ordain the candidate into pastoral ministry.

ENTRY POINTS

Not every candidate seeking Ordination into Pastoral Ministry is starting at the same place. Some are coming right out of seminary and have little experience. Some have less formal training but a lot of ministry experience. Some have both formal training and years of experience and some have been ordained outside the Charis Fellowship.

With this reality in view, the Pastoral Ordination Process has a variety of **ENTRY POINTS**. Although the entry points are flexible the purpose of the Process remains to assist and protect the local church by assessing theological understanding, doctrinal convictions, ministerial skills, personal life & integrity and an understanding of the mission of the church of the candidate. **The District Examination Board will determine the best entry point for each candidate based on an evaluation of ministry experience and Biblical training.**

ENTRY POINT A - The Beginner

Those with limited ministry experience or Biblical training will be assigned a mentor by the District Examination Board who will help him prepare for the written and oral exam as well as intentionally evaluate his life and ministry skills. This process is expected to take up to but no longer than 3 years.

ENTRY POINT B - The Veteran

Those who have received sufficient Biblical training and have more extensive ministry experience will be assigned a mentor by the District Examination Board who will help prepare for the written and oral exam as well as intentionally evaluate his life and ministry skills. The length of this process is more flexible than for the Beginner because of his ministry experience.

ENTRY POINT C – Already Licensed.

Those who have already been licensed within the Fellowship, but have not yet been ordained, have already passed a rigorous and thorough written and oral exam by a District Examination Board. These men will complete the **Pastoral Ordination Application**, submit it to the District Examination Board and then be assigned a mentor to review the Application. These discussions are intended to be a time for evaluation of the candidate's personal doctrinal convictions, personal life, ministerial skills and integrity. The District Examination Board will then meet with the candidate to review the completed **Pastoral Ordination Application** before making a formal recommendation to the local church for Ordination.

ENTRY POINT D – Already Ordained

Those who have been ordained outside the Fellowship will complete the **Pastoral Ordination Application**, submit it to the District Examination Board and then be assigned a mentor to review the Application. These discussions are intended to be a time for evaluation of the candidate's personal doctrinal convictions, personal life, ministerial skills and integrity. (Depending on the candidate's alignment with our Charis Identity, the mentor may recommend the candidate take the National Written Exam.) When the Mentor is confident the candidate is in alignment with our Charis Identity to the extent the he can live and serve harmoniously within the Charis Fellowship, the mentor will recommend him to the District Examination Board. The District Examination

Board will then meet with the candidate to review the completed **Pastoral Ordination Application** before making a formal recommendation to the local church for Ordination.

STEP 1 - INSPIRE Pastoral Ministry or Ordination Application

Name _____ Age _____ Email _____

Address _____ Phone _____

Have you previously applied for examination for local church commissioning to pastoral ministry (traditional licensure) or ordination in a Charis Fellowship Church?

Yes or No (If Yes Circle One: Commissioning or Ordination)

Date _____ District _____

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

1. How long have you been a Christian?

2. Give your personal testimony?

3. Why is your belief in Jesus so strategic to everything you do (in your personal life, church, your world, our Fellowship)?

4. Briefly explain your personal and family habit in devotional bible study and prayer.

CHURCH AFFILIATION RECORD

Please provide the name, location and dates of the church families you have primarily been connected to:

CHURCH MEMBER (Y/N)

PLACE

DATES

FAMILY LIFE

1. Single ___ Married ___

2. If Married: Date _____ Place _____

3. Have you or your wife ever been divorced? _____

4. Have your wife provide her personal testimony summary.

5. Briefly describe your strategy for maintaining a strong marriage

6. List children, if any:

NAME

AGE

IF SAVED AT WHAT AGE

7. Are there any family relationships that are broken? If so, explain and share what steps you have taken to restore that relationship.

CALL TO CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

1. Explain your call to Christian ministry.

2. What gifts has God given you for Christian ministry?

3. Why are you seeking Ordination?

EDUCATIONAL

1. What educational preparation have you had?

SCHOOL

DEGREE

MAJOR

DATE

2. Do you plan to take additional education work?

ETHICAL ISSUES

1. Explain your strategy for maintaining integrity in ministry:

2. How would you describe your financial strategy? Have you ever filed for bankruptcy? **(Yes or No)**

3. In case of difficulties in your ministry, would you be willing to consult with your district examining board

4. What are your ideas as to how a minister should conduct himself toward women in and out of the church?

5. What is your personal view of the use of alcoholic beverages, tobacco, marijuana and narcotics?

6. Do you have any arrest record or felony convictions? **(Yes or No)**
Have you provided the local church with a criminal background and child abuse clearances. **(Yes or No)**

REFERENCES

Provide references from three people:

- (1) A Pastor who knows you well and whom you respect
- (2) A Friend who knows you well and whom you respect
- (3) A Non-Believer who knows you well and whom you respect

*Reference Form Provided on next page.

Reference Form for Pastoral Ordination (Pastor/Elder)

_____ (**Applicants Name**) is applying for Pastoral Ordination in the Charis Fellowship and has given your name as a reference. We appreciate your prompt response to the following questions and want to assure you that all information received will be treated confidentially. References are very important to the Examination Board in determining the qualifications and character of an applicant. Family members and subordinates (employee/volunteer) are not acceptable as references. To qualify as a reference, you must have known the applicant for at least one year.

This reference is submitted by (**Your Name**)

How long have you personally known the applicant?

What is your relationship with the applicant?

Would you describe the applicant as Very Effective/ Somewhat Effective/ Not Effective in ministry? (**Circle one**)

Does the applicant work well with others? (**Yes or No**)

Explain how the applicant deals with conflict.

If you have a comfortable understanding of Christianity, would you say the applicant is living a life that reflects a desire to be like Jesus Christ? (**Yes or No or N/A**)

If you have ever observed the applicant preach a sermon, how would you evaluate the his ability to preach and/or teach? (Circle N/A if not observed)

If you have a comfortable understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, how would you evaluate the applicant's ability to share the Gospel? (Circle N/A if you are not comfortable answering this question)

Describe the applicant's relationship with his wife and children (If applicable).

How would you describe the applicant's social skills?

How would you describe the applicant's work ethic?

How would you describe the applicant's leadership skills (Wisdom, Discernment, Responsibility, Vision)?

Are there any areas of behavior that you are aware of that could hinder the applicant's ability to lead in Christian ministry? (For example: Improper sexual behavior, drunkenness, unethical behavior)

If you were looking to hire a pastor or needed personal pastoral care, would you hire this candidate or desire the applicant to help during your time of need? **(Yes or No)**
Please explain:

Reference Form for Pastoral Ordination (Friend)

_____ (**Applicants Name**) is applying for Pastoral Ordination in the Charis Fellowship and has given your name as a reference. We appreciate your prompt response to the following questions and want to assure you that all information received will be treated confidentially. References are very important to the Examination Board in determining the qualifications and character of an applicant. Family members and subordinates (employee/volunteer) are not acceptable as references. To qualify as a reference, you must have known the applicant for at least one year.

This reference is submitted by (**Your Name**)

How long have you personally known the applicant?

What is your relationship with the applicant?

Would you describe the applicant as Very Effective/ Somewhat Effective/ Not Effective in ministry? (**Circle one**)

Does the applicant work well with others? (**Yes or No**)

Explain how the applicant deals with conflict.

If you have a comfortable understanding of Christianity, would you say the applicant is living a life that reflects a desire to be like Jesus Christ? (**Yes or No or N/A**)

If you have ever observed the applicant preach a sermon, how would you evaluate the his ability to preach and/or teach? (Circle N/A if not observed)

If you have a comfortable understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, how would you evaluate the applicant's ability to share the Gospel? (Circle N/A if you are not comfortable answering this question)

Describe the applicant's relationship with his wife and children (If applicable).

How would you describe the applicant's social skills?

How would you describe the applicant's work ethic?

How would you describe the applicant's leadership skills (Wisdom, Discernment, Responsibility, Vision)?

Are there any areas of behavior that you are aware of that could hinder the applicant's ability to lead in Christian ministry? (For example: Improper sexual behavior, drunkenness, unethical behavior)

If you were looking to hire a pastor or needed personal pastoral care, would you hire this candidate or desire the applicant to help during your time of need? **(Yes or No)**

Please explain:

Reference Form for Pastoral Ordination (Friend)

_____ (**Applicants Name**) is applying for Pastoral Ordination in the Charis Fellowship and has given your name as a reference. We appreciate your prompt response to the following questions and want to assure you that all information received will be treated confidentially. References are very important to the Examination Board in determining the qualifications and character of an applicant. Family members and subordinates (employee/volunteer) are not acceptable as references. To qualify as a reference, you must have known the applicant for at least one year.

This reference is submitted by (**Your Name**)

How long have you personally known the applicant?

What is your relationship with the applicant?

Would you describe the applicant as Very Effective/ Somewhat Effective/ Not Effective in ministry? (**Circle one**)

Does the applicant work well with others? (**Yes or No**)

Explain how the applicant deals with conflict.

If you have a comfortable understanding of Christianity, would you say the applicant is living a life that reflects a desire to be like Jesus Christ? (**Yes or No or N/A**)

If you have ever observed the applicant preach a sermon, how would you evaluate the his ability to preach and/or teach? (Circle N/A if not observed)

If you have a comfortable understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, how would you evaluate the applicant's ability to share the Gospel? (Circle N/A if you are not comfortable answering this question)

Describe the applicant's relationship with his wife and children (If applicable).

How would you describe the applicant's social skills?

How would you describe the applicant's work ethic?

How would you describe the applicant's leadership skills (Wisdom, Discernment, Responsibility, Vision)?

Are there any areas of behavior that you are aware of that could hinder the applicant's ability to lead in Christian ministry? (For example: Improper sexual behavior, drunkenness, unethical behavior)

If you were looking to hire a pastor or needed personal pastoral care, would you hire this candidate or desire the applicant to help during your time of need? **(Yes or No)**
Please explain:

A FIRST LOOK AT CHARIS IDENTITY **UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL TRUTH, RELATIONSHIP AND MISSION**

Local Church: The following tool can be used for Pastoral search teams, but should be included with the Local Church Recognition form to the District Examining Board.

Candidate: For each of the following statements, please indicate your level of understanding or agreement:

1. **The One True God** - *There is one, and only one, true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the Creator and Lord of all, existing eternally in three persons, never less and never more - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

2. **The Lord Jesus Christ** - *Jesus Christ is fully God, existing eternally. Everything was created by Him and for Him. His incarnation took place in the womb of a virgin. He became man, but never sinned. He died a substitutionary death to atone for sin, resurrected bodily, and ascended into heaven where He remains fully God and fully man, and is presently ministering until He comes again.*

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

3. **The Holy Spirit** - *The Holy Spirit is fully God, existing eternally. He is a person, and was involved in Creation and the inspiration of Scripture. His works of convicting and regenerating are essential to the believer's salvation. Believers are entitled to the benefit and joy of being filled and walking in the Spirit for empowerment in Christian life, service, and mission.*

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

4. **The Bible** - *The sixty-six books, and only these, known as the Old and New Testaments, are the written Word of God. God's inspiration and superintendence of the writing of every word of the Bible guarantees that what was written is His Word and therefore authoritative, true, and without error in the original manuscripts. God preserves His Word, which is powerful and effective to accomplish His purpose of salvation among all nations. God's Spirit illumines the minds of believers in every culture to understand and apply the unchanging truth of Scripture in fresh and relevant ways for the benefit of the whole Body of Christ.*

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

5. **Humanity** - *God created man and woman in His image. As a result, all people are bearers of that image. However, Adam's subsequent sin resulted in a condition of spiritual death which all people since Adam have experienced, marring the beauty of God's image in them in every facet of life. This condition of spiritual death has rendered all people unable to save themselves, and leads to physical death. Therefore, new birth is necessary for salvation.*

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

6. **Salvation** - The salvation brought by God is a complete and eternal salvation by His grace alone, received as the free gift of God through personal faith alone in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work, as he declares believers righteous in Him. True believers put their trust in Jesus Christ and are kept forever in the saving grace of God through His promises and His power. Every believer has been eternally justified, blessed with all spiritual blessings, and set free from all condemnation.

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

7. **Church** - There exists one true Church, which is called the Household of God, the Body of Christ, and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. It is comprised of all true disciples of Jesus Christ, and is created by the action of the Holy Spirit. Tangible expressions of this true Church are found in local churches.

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

8. **Christian Life** - The believer is saved by faith alone. The faith that saves is expected to produce obedience and good works, which are the products of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The dimensions of biblical ethics are both individual and social, and extend to every facet of life. God faithfully continues to finish the work of sanctification, which He initiated in the life of each believer with the goal of Christlikeness. The Holy Spirit's works of baptizing, sealing, and indwelling occur simultaneously with regeneration and are the possession of every true believer. The Holy Spirit gives each believer a unique combination of spiritual gifts for the purpose of serving God and people.

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

9. **Angels, Satan, Demons** - God created a multitude of spiritual beings called "angels". Righteous angels continue to serve God and work both in the heavenly sphere and on earth. By his disobedience, Satan, a fallen angel, became the adversary of God and God's people, carrying with him a procession of demons. Jesus Christ has overcome Satan so that the final judgment and doom of Satan and his demons are certain.

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

10. **Future Life** - The dead will have a conscious existence in eternity and their bodies will be resurrected. Unbelievers, already under condemnation, will be sentenced to suffer eternal separation from God. Believers, already having been granted eternal life, will be judged and rewarded according to their works, and will experience a glorified, eternal existence in the presence of the Lord.

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

11. **Ordinances** – Jesus Christ gave ordinances to the church: Baptism testifies to the reality of our salvation and identifies us as disciples of the Triune God. The Grace Brethren express this ordinance in triune immersion. Communion testifies to our justification, sanctification and glorification, which are accomplished through Jesus Christ. The Grace Brethren express this ordinance through the practice of these symbols: the bread and the cup, the washing of feet and the sharing of a meal.

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

12. **The Return of Christ** – The Church began on a particular day of Pentecost when our ascended Lord sent His Spirit to the waiting disciples. The present Church age will come to an end when our Lord comes in the air to remove His Church from the earth and fulfill His promises to Israel. The second coming of Christ is the personal, physical, and visible return from heaven of Christ to earth with His Church, to establish His thousand-year reign before instituting His eternal kingdom.

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

13. **Biblical Relationships** – The Triune God serves as the perfect and ultimate model for human relationships. As a result, each person has equal value yet different roles, which are expressed in loving unity. The differences in gifts and ministries are a manifestation of the multifaceted grace of God. As a result, we encourage all believers to use their gifts in ways that promote the unity, growth and ministry of the local church.

Our obligation to love and respect one another and to practice the “one another” exhortations results in a commitment to work together and to resolve our differences for the good of individuals, churches and communities.

It is the responsibility of the local church to govern their own affairs while living and serving in community and interdependency with other churches. The mandate and urgency to fulfill the Great Commission leads us to seek ways to cooperate with one another and with likeminded Christians on the local, regional and global levels.

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE

14. **Biblical Mission** – God's plan for this age is best summarized in Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations. This includes the evangelistic call to reconciliation with God by means of the completed work of Christ and the lifelong pursuit of obedience to God by means of the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit.

God's plan for this age includes the recognition, training and releasing of spiritually qualified and appropriately trained leaders. While the specific gifts, abilities and responsibilities of leaders may vary, all leaders must serve as servants of God, shepherds of God's people and stewards of God's resources.

God's plan for this age is most fully expressed through establishing healthy churches. Although practices may vary between cultures, healthy local churches are comprised of

believers in Christ who assume a mutual commitment to worship, learning, service, prayer and witness.

God's plan for this age includes our responsibility to express the compassion of Christ through proclaiming the Gospel in words while loving in deeds. This demands a commitment to finding creative and practical ways to address the physical, emotional, social and spiritual needs of a fallen humanity.

I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS **THIS ACCURATELY DESCRIBES WHAT I BELIEVE**

STEP 2 - Local Church Recognition Form

The **LOCAL CHURCH** has the authority and responsibility to ordain pastors for ministry. The Pastoral Ordination process begins with the local church officially recognizing a man who has demonstrated sound character, ministerial gifting and calling into the pastoral ministry. However, as a member church in the *Charis Fellowship* there should be a commitment to mutual accountability, support and help. Submission to the process accepted by our Fellowship and the INSPIRE demonstrates this mutual relationship. Recognition from a district examination board not only strengthens your church but it nurtures our mutual relationship.

Please complete this form in accordance with your local church policies and submit it along with the completed Application Form to the District Chairman of your District or the President of INSPIRE if no District Examination Board exists.

(Name of candidate for Pastoral Ordination)

is officially recognized by

(Name of Local Church)

and it's leadership as having solid Christian character, discernment and ability in ministry. We also recognize God's calling in his life for Christian ministry. We understand that this commissioning to Pastoral Ministry is valid only in our local church until the ordination process has been complete. We therefore request that he be examined for Ordination by the District (National) Examining Board as to his qualification in Biblical Truth, Biblical Relationship and Biblical Mission.

Elder or Officer

Elder or Officer

Elder of Officer

Step 3 – Preparation & Mentorship

Mentorship Expectations

1. Build a strong relationship. Spend time together getting to know one another and praying together.
2. Evaluate the Application with the Candidate looking for areas of concern.
3. Prepare the Candidate for both written and oral exam using the Charis Beliefs 1 & 2.
4. Make recommendation for improvement in Biblical understanding, ministry skills, relationships and integrity using **Mentor Assessment Check List**.
5. Provide the **Mentor Recommendation of Life, Ministry and Integrity Form** to the District Examination Board prior to written exam.

Recommended Reading List

The candidate is not expected to read ALL these books, nor is this list intended to limit the candidates reading list. The candidate and the mentor may agree on a reading list that will best equip the candidate for a successful written and oral examination.

<i>Restoring the Household</i>	Todd Scoles
<i>Ordinances: What Are They</i>	David Plaster
<i>Finding Our Focus</i>	David Plaster
<i>Could It Be Three</i>	Tim Hodge
<i>Doing Right While Doing Good</i>	Ken Bickel, Kevin Vanderguard
<i>The Greatness of the Kingdom</i>	Alva J. McClain
<i>Law and Grace</i>	Alva J. McClain
<i>Millennialism: Two Views</i>	Charles Feinberg
<i>Well Intentioned Dragons</i>	Marshall Shelley

Charis Beliefs

“Charis Beliefs is a set of resources being developed around the framework of the Charis Commitment to Common Identity. The purpose of these resources is to provide concise training in our shared theology for individuals, study groups, leadership teams, elder boards, and especially as a guide for mentors to use to help prepare those working through the ordination process.

CHARIS BELIEFS – Workbook 1

The Center and Evangelical Core

INTRODUCTION

SESSION 1 – The One True God

SESSION 2 – The Lord Jesus Christ

SESSION 3 – The Holy Spirit

SESSION 4 – The Bible

SESSION 5 – Humanity

SESSION 6 – Salvation

SESSION 7 – Church

SESSION 8 – Christian Life

SESSION 9 - Angels, Satan, Demons

SESSION 10 – Future Life

CHARIS BELIEFS – Workbook 2

The Shared Commitments of our Global Movement

INTRODUCTION

SESSION 1 – Hermeneutics

SESSION 2 – Christian Ethics

SESSION 3 – Regeneration

SESSION 4 – Ordinances

SESSION 5 – The Church

SESSION 6 – Roles & Gifts

SESSION 7 – Fellowship

SESSION 8 – Discipleship

SESSION 9 – Historical Context

SESSION 10 - Global Impact

Mentor Assessment Check List

1. Theology & Doctrine

- a. The Center Date Completed _____
- b. The One True God Date Completed _____
- c. The Lord Jesus Christ Date Completed _____
- d. The Holy Spirit Date Completed _____
- e. The Bible Date Completed _____
- f. Humanity Date Completed _____
- g. Salvation Date Completed _____
- h. Church Date Completed _____
- i. Christian Life Date Completed _____
- j. Angels, Satan, Demons Date Completed _____
- k. Future Life Date Completed _____

2. Personal Relationship with God

- a. Application Review Date Completed _____
- b. Regeneration Date Completed _____

3. Ministry Skill

- a. Historical Context Date Completed _____
- b. Hermeneutics Date Completed _____
- c. Ordinances Date Completed _____
- d. Discipleship Date Completed _____
- e. Global Impact Date Completed _____

4. Personal Relationships with Others

- a. Roles and Gifts Date Completed _____
- b. Fellowship Date Completed _____

5. Integrity

- a. Christian Ethics Date Completed _____
- b. The Church Date Completed _____

Mentor Recommendation of Life, Ministry and Integrity Form

After careful evaluation, as the District (National) Approved Mentor, from _____ (Starting Date) to _____ (Completion Date) – I fully recommend _____ (Name of Candidate) to be examined by the District Examining Board for Ordination. We have completed the Mentor Assessment Checklist and I am confident that this candidate has the theological understanding, the ministry skill, the ethical integrity and the personal relationship with God and others that would reflect a close walk with Jesus Christ.

Candidate Print Name

Mentor Print Name

Candidate Sign Name

Mentor Sign Name

Step 4 - Examination Procedure

WRITTEN EXAM

Each candidate will complete a written exam based on questions relating to the **Charis Fellowship Identity Statement** and **Positions Statements**. This exam is intended to aid and protect local churches by assessing the candidate's theological understanding, doctrinal convictions, ministerial skills, personal life, integrity and an understanding of the mission of the church. This exam will be updated annually to reflect any changes in our Position Statements.

ORAL EXAM

Each candidate will prepare for and follow through with an Oral Exam where the District (or National) Examination Board will evaluate the candidate's application, references, written exam and report from the Mentor. The focus of the oral exam will be on areas of weakness or insufficiency. The Examination Board's final recommendation will be based on the following Standard for Affirmation.

STANDARDS FOR AFFIRMATION

1. The candidate has a mastery level understanding of Scripture, the Gospel, theology and doctrine so that he can adequately teach others.
2. The candidate has a clear understanding of the mission of the church.
3. The candidate has solid Christian character, discernment and ability in ministry.
4. The candidate has the support of his spouse (if married) and has healthy relationships.
5. The candidate has a clear understanding of his calling in pastoral ministry.
6. The candidate agrees to cooperate harmoniously and walk with integrity within the Charis Fellowship Family:
 - a. That is part of the Evangelical community.
 - b. Whose ordinances are triune immersion and threefold communion.
 - c. Whose eschatology follows a pre-millennial hermeneutic.
 - d. That believes the eldership of the church has been given to men.
 - e. That believes in the security of the believer.
7. The candidate intends to be intentional about his relationships with the Charis Fellowship Family.

STEP 5 - RECOMMENDATION FOR ORDINATION



This Affirms that _____ has successfully met the requirements for being ordained as a Charis Fellowship pastor. This is being given in recognition of a call to Christian ministry, a life of personal and professional integrity, a demonstration of skills as they relate to pastoral care and a demonstration of a working knowledge of the Bible and a commitment to it as the Word of God.

_____ is hereby recommended to his church as a man qualified for pastoral ministry in a Charis Fellowship Church. All legal credentials to be bestowed upon him rest in the authority of the Local Church. The Local Church also bears the responsibility to hold him accountable to the standards set forth in Scripture for Christian ministry and as an Elder in a Grace Brethren church.

Given this _____ Day of _____ 20_____

Local Church Pastor/Elder

Exam Chairman

Local Church Pastor/Elder

Ordained Pastor

Local Church Pastor/Elder

Ordained Pastor

LOCAL CHURCH ORDINATION SERVICE INSTRUCTIONS

The following are instructions for an ordination service to be planned and executed by the leaders of the local church. It is not the responsibility of the District, the Fellowship or the man being ordained to plan or execute the ordination service.

1. The Elders of the Local Church should plan a special service. The man being ordained should provide input, but should not be expected to plan the service alone. Traditionally an Ordination Service includes the favorite worship songs of the candidate, a speaker that would be meaningful to the candidate and a time of recognition by the District Examination Chairman, but feel free to be creative. Remember the purpose of the Ordination Service is to affirm and celebrate the candidate's call to pastoral ministry
2. District pastors should be invited. The District Exam Chairman upon request can provide a list of pastors and addresses.
3. A meal should be planned if possible. The local church family should plan this meal.
4. A special offering should be taken to bless the pastor in ministry.
5. A signed copy of the Ordination Certificate should be sent to the District Examination Chairman and the INSPIRE President.

Other Important Information Regarding Local Church Ordination

When hiring a pastor who already holds Ordination credentials, it is the responsibility of the local church to request proof of those credentials from the church that ordained him. It is not the responsibility of the District or INSPIRE to transfer credentials from church to church. The local church may request the District Examination Board to verify alignment with Charis Fellowship practices and beliefs when hiring an ordained pastor outside the Charis Fellowship of churches before ordaining him as a Charis Fellowship pastor.