

## **B. The Licensed Minister**

**530.** A licensed minister is one whose ministerial calling and gifts have been formally recognized by the district assembly through the granting of a ministerial license. The district license authorizes and appoints the minister to a larger sphere of service and to greater rights and responsibilities than those pertaining to a local minister, normally as a step toward ordination as an elder or a deacon. The district ministerial license shall include a statement indicating whether the minister is preparing for ordination as an elder or a deacon or a district license not leading to ordination. (530.7)

**530.1.** When members of the Church of the Nazarene acknowledge a call to a lifetime of ministry, they may be licensed as ministers by the district assembly provided they:

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1. have held a local minister's license for one full year;
2. have completed one-fourth of a validated course of study for ministers, or have passed the Nazarene history and polity courses and five additional courses in a validated course of study for ministers;
3. have been recommended for such work by the church board of the local church of which they are members, to which recommendation shall be attached the Application for Minister's License carefully filled in;
4. have given evidence of grace, gifts, and usefulness;
5. have been carefully examined, under the direction of the district assembly of the district within the bounds of which they hold their church membership, regarding their spiritual, intellectual, and other fitness for such work, including appropriate background checks as determined by the District Advisory Board;
6. have promised to pursue immediately a validated course of study prescribed for licensed ministers and candidates for ordination;
7. have had any disqualification, which may have been imposed

by a district assembly, removed by an explanation in writing by the district superintendent and the District Advisory Board of the district where the disqualification was imposed; and provided further that their marriage relationship does not render them ineligible for a district license; and

8. in case of a previous divorce, the recommendation of the District Ministerial Credentials Board along with supporting documents will be given to the Board of General Superintendents, which may remove this as a barrier to pursuing a license. (30.1-30.3, 129.14, 205.6, 529.5)

If enrolled in a Nazarene college/university or seminary, the minister must have completed one-fourth of a validated college/university or college/university-seminary course of study for ministry, or have completed one-fourth of a validated district or regional training center curriculum. Exceptions to this requirement may be made by the District Ministerial Credentials Board provided the candidate is pastoring an ministry and christian service 209

organized church and is registered in a system of approved studies, and provided the candidate annually fulfills the minimum amount of studies required by the *Manual* for the renewal of a license, and provided the district superintendent approves the exception.

In the case where a background check reveals criminal misconduct prior to one's salvation, this fact should not be interpreted by the District Ministerial Credentials Board as automatically excluding the applicant from credentialed ministry, except under the provisions of paragraph 538.9.

**530.2.** Licensed ministers from other denominations, desiring to unite with the Church of the Nazarene, may be licensed as ministers by the district assembly, provided they present the credentials issued to them by the denomination in which they formerly held their membership; and further provided that they:

1. have passed a course of study equivalent to a validated course of study in the Church of the Nazarene for local ministers;
2. have been recommended by the church board of the local Church of the Nazarene of which they are members;
3. have given evidence of grace, gifts, and usefulness;
4. have been carefully examined under the direction of the district assembly regarding their spiritual, intellectual, and other fitness for such work;
5. have promised to pursue immediately a validated course of study prescribed for licensed ministers and candidates for ordination;
6. have had any disqualification, which may have been imposed by a district assembly or its equivalent, removed by an explanation in writing by the district superintendent or his or her equivalent and the District Advisory Board or its equivalent of the district where the disqualification was imposed; and provided further that their marriage relationship does not render them ineligible for a district license; and
7. in case of a previous divorce, the recommendation of the District Ministerial Credentials Board along with supporting documents will be given to the Board of General Superintendents, which may remove this as a barrier to pursuing a license. (530.1)

**530.3.** A minister's license shall terminate with the close of the next district assembly. It may be renewed by vote of the district assembly, provided:

1. that the candidate for renewal shall file with the district assembly the Application for Minister's License carefully filled in; and
2. that the candidate shall have completed at least two courses in a validated course of study; and
3. that the candidate has been recommended for the renewal

of license by the church board of the local church of which he or she is a member, upon the nomination of the pastor.

In case, however, he or she shall not have passed a validated course of study required, the license may be renewed by the district assembly only upon submission of a written explanation for this failure. Such explanation shall be satisfactory to the District Ministerial Credentials Board and approved by the general superintendent presiding. The district assembly may, for cause and at its discretion, vote against the renewal of a minister's license.

Licensed ministers who have graduated from a validated course of study and have been placed in retired relation by the district assembly shall, with the recommendation of the District Advisory Board, have their license renewed without the filing of an Application for Minister's License. (203.4)

**530.4.** To qualify for ordination, candidates must achieve graduation from a validated course of study within 10 years from the granting of the first district license. Any exception, due to unusual circumstances, may be granted by the Ministerial Credentials Board, subject to the approval of the general superintendent in jurisdiction.

A licensed minister who is not pursuing ordination or who is disqualified from ordination for failure to complete a validated course of study within the prescribed time limit may be granted renewal of minister's license upon recommendation ministry and christian service 211 of the District Advisory Board and the Ministerial Credentials Board.

**530.5.** In the case of licensed ministers who are serving as pastors, the recommendation for the renewal of minister's license shall be made by the District Advisory Board. In the case of local ministers who are serving as pastors, the recommendation for the granting of minister's license shall be made by the District Advisory Board. (222.11)

**530.6.** The general superintendent having jurisdiction shall issue to each licensed minister a minister's license, bearing the signature of the general superintendent in jurisdiction, the district superintendent, and the district secretary.

**530.7.** Licensed ministers shall be vested with authority to preach the Word and/or to use their gifts and graces in various associate ministries in servant ministry to the Body of Christ. In addition, provided they pass annually their required studies and are in an active and assigned ministry recognized by their local district, licensed ministers shall also be vested with authority to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper in their own congregations, and to officiate at marriages where the laws of the state do not prohibit. (30.2, 510-511, 514, 514.4, 514.9, 522, 531-531.2, 532-532.2, 800, 802, 803)

**530.8.** All licensed ministers shall hold their ministerial membership in the district assembly of the district wherein their church membership is held, and shall report to this body annually. (201, 203.3, 520)

**530.9.** A licensed minister who has united with a church or denomination other than the Church of the Nazarene, or engaged in other Christian ministry without the approval of his or her home District Advisory Board shall find his or her church membership and ministerial designation in the Church of the Nazarene will immediately cease, unless he or she has written approval of the Board of General Superintendents. In its minutes, the district assembly will record the following statement: "Removed from the membership and ministry of the Church of the Nazarene by uniting with another church, denomination, or ministry." (107, 112)