

PROGRESSION

BUILDING A BETTER YOU



by
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Progression: Building a Better You

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Since deep antiquity, there has always been a process by which the church recognizes those who are called to be ministers. In some traditions, the process is a long one. For example, those who serve as ministers in the Dutch Reformed Church normally complete at least seven years of formal training. In the Orthodox, Catholic, and Episcopalian traditions, the process is both formal and reflective. For some, it involves the serious commitment of taking vows and spending long hours in careful contemplation before assuming the high responsibility of ministry.

In our tradition, the process has tended to be a little less demanding or formal. However, since the inception of the Assemblies of God and its sister fellowships around the world, there is an undisputed commitment to recognize leaders and to do so by credentialing those found worthy of the high office of ministry. This commitment is vitally important. Those in ministry can have immense influence in the lives of those they serve. Major life choices will be made by people influenced and instructed by those who have a ministry responsibility; consequently, credentialing and ordination are processes that should never be taken lightly.

The Church is served by some of the most committed and sacrificial people in the world. Missionaries labor in unfriendly environments, chaplains give their lives to serve others, and hundreds of pastors give their time and effort willingly and gladly. Unfortunately, all of these amazing efforts can be detrimentally impacted by those who fail in their moral and spiritual commitments; therefore, for the sake of the witness of the Church and the honor of Christ, it is vitally important that those seeking to serve in ministry should go through the rigors of a clearly defined credentialing process.

It is for this reason that we have teamed up to create this resource. We believe that ministerial training is important enough for our two organizations—the Rocky Mountain Ministry Network and Trinity Bible College and Graduate School—to forge a collaborative partnership. We stand ready to equip, encourage, and coach you along your journey.



8 Advantages to Advancing Your Credential

There are many powerful reasons a minister should exist in a state of continual learning and credential advancement, a few of which are:

1. **Personal growth.** Learning should be a lifelong process, and devoting time to continuing education can be a journey of personal development. By advancing your credential, you are making an investment in your personal growth. You are also becoming a better steward of kingdom resources by increasing your effectiveness and preparedness for ministry.

2. **Greater credibility.** Whether it is the medical field or watchmaking, every career path has different levels of certification. Once those you lead discover higher levels of credentialing are available to you but have not been achieved, they may have less confidence in your abilities as a leader. For example, watchmakers have five levels of certification. Those seeking certification must prove their skills by performing quality repairs on materials for which they are certified. Their certification involves a stringent three-day examination of four major areas involving the technical aspects of watchmaking including automatic watches, quartz watches, and chronographs. To keep their certificate current, watchmakers must complete continuing education courses throughout their career. If a watch we use to plan and prioritize our day requires that the watchmaker be certified, how much more should a minister by whom we synchronize our souls be certified? If you were choosing a place to get your watch repaired, which level of certification would you prefer?
3. **Increased opportunity.** Most churches have employees who are not ordained. These people work in ministry but usually serve in areas that support ministry functions. However, ordained ministry carries greater authority and responsibility to God's people. As a matter of fact, the bylaws of most Assemblies of God churches require those who serve as a lead pastor be ordained. Why? Because even pastoral search committees feel that higher levels of credentialing better prepare a person for greater responsibility, stewardship, entrustment, remuneration, and promotion.
4. **Formal endorsement.** Certification and licensing ensure that your spiritual eldership has recognized God's call upon your life. However, ordination goes one step beyond that. It is an affirmation that your spiritual eldership has examined your life closely and witnessed God's blessing and favor upon your ministry.
5. **Leadership potential.** According to both The General Council of the Assemblies of God and our network bylaws, the highest level of leadership requires the highest level of credential (ordination). For example, the district superintendent/network pastor, assistant superintendent, secretary treasurer, executive presbyters, every member of the presbytery, provisional presbyters, and those empowered to call a special meeting of the Network Council in the event of an emergency are all required to be ordained. That means the network's source of leadership, vision, and potential will be limited to the pool of those who are ordained. In other words, ordination is the lid that determines your highest potential and capacity as a leader in our Fellowship. We owe it to ourselves and our future to maintain the highest percentage of ordained ministers within our network.
6. **Spiritual growth.** Advancing your credential will require classes that will increase your knowledge of the Word, enlarge your theological foundation, and bring spiritual growth to your life. In essence, you will be increasing the capacity of your soul and enabling yourself to bring deeper and greater levels of spiritual resiliency to your ministry. For example, a minister who is certified has yet to go through the AG's internship, pass the AG polity exam, and take the 18 classes required for license and ordination. A person who is licensed has yet to take 8 classes, be interviewed by the Executive Presbytery and be officially endorsed by receiving ordination, participating in the ordination ceremony and receive the

laying on of hands by the Network eldership. Not only should these growth opportunities be important to you, but they will be important to those considering you for future ministry positions. Additional information on these growth opportunities can be found at: http://www.agspe.org/AG_Credentials.pdf

7. **Ordination has benefits and privileges.** To recognize and honor the sacrifice, commitment, and ministry accomplishments of those who have achieved the highest level of credential, the Rocky Mountain Ministry offers exclusive benefits to those who are ordained. Among these benefits is a 50% discount on all graduate level tuition in the Masters and PhD programs of Trinity Bible College and Seminary. As one of our primary educational partners, Trinity assists us by investing in leaders already serving in our Network, as well as increasing our ability to recruit new ministers to serve as lead pastors and staff in our RMMN churches. For more information on the qualifications and requirements of this and other benefits, contact the District Superintendent's office or visit www.agspe.org/trinityscholarship.pdf.
8. **Maximum impact.** When each of the advantages above are considered, the sum total produces maximum impact on the kingdom of God.

If you are a certified minister who has yet to be licensed or a licensed minister who has not yet been ordained, why not call your network office today and begin advancing your credential. God has more for you to accomplish than your present or your past.



Practical Steps to Advancement

By now you may be wondering what steps you should take to advance your ministerial credential. No matter what stage of credential you may have, the following steps will need to be taken to advance:

1. **Complete an educational audit.** An educational audit is a review of the classes you have taken and your life experience to determine what steps are needed to progress to the next level of credential. This audit is done in consultation with the credentialing office of the Rocky Mountain Ministry Network. Please make an appointment with our credentialing specialist at secretariat@rmdc.org.
2. **Make yourself accountable.** After you receive the results of the educational audit and know what steps to take, increase your likelihood of success by making yourself accountable to a minister friend or presbyter. Tell them what classes you need to take and the timeframe you have set to have them completed. Ask them to provide the encouragement and accountability to finish by checking in on your progress every now and then. If you do not have an accountability partner, we would be happy to assist you in finding one.

3. **Take necessary classes.** Your educational audit may reveal a class or classes you need to satisfy the educational requirements of your desired credential. You can learn more about our educational partners who can provide this instruction by reading “Preparing for Ministry.” This PDF document provides answers and options to help you take the necessary classes. It can be found at www.rmdc.org/credentials
4. **Begin the application process.** When you have completed all the necessary classes, you request an application for the next level of credential. You will then be contacted via email with the paperwork required to apply. You can get more information about how to do this at <https://www.rmdc.org/credentialing-application>.
5. **Exam and interview.** Once all the paperwork has been submitted and approved, the RMMN credentialing office will contact you to set up an exam. Following is a summary of the exams, interviews, and resources available to help you prepare.
 - A. **Certified level.** You will be required to take two exams (*Bible Knowledge* and *Doctrine*). All exam(s) are taken online, and you will be responsible for obtaining a proctor for your exam(s). The proctor must be an Assemblies of God minister who currently has the same credential you are seeking or higher. When the exams are completed and passed with a grade of 70 percent or higher, a date and time will be set up through your presbyter for you to be interviewed by the sectional committee.

We have collaborated with credential specialists around the Nation to make the following resources available to help prepare you for the certified exam and interview. They vary in approach to help you find one that suites your unique style of learning.

- **Podcast:** Listen to the exam and interview coaching podcast for the certified level at this link: www.agspe.org/advance1a.mp3
 - **Q&A:** Examples of potential interview questions for the certified level can be accessed at this link: www.agspe.org/advance1b.pdf
 - **PDF:** General Council official study guide: www.agspe.org/advance1c.pdf
 - **Interactive:** Pathway offers a free online interactive and guided study with other helpful resources for those who register at: <https://pathway.training/practice-test-for-credentialing/>
 - **E-book:** Dr. Tim Laurito’s free e-book entitled, *Glossolalia, Speaking in Tongues and Initial Physical Evidence*, will help you prepare for your credentialing exam and interview. You can access this resource at: www.agspe.org/GIPE_RMMN.pdf
 - **Article:** To help you prepare for your credential interview, Pastor Rob Rocca breaks it down and explains the relationship between the baptism in the Holy Spirit, initial physical evidence, and the local church. You can access this resource at: www.agspe.org/CDD_RMMN.pdf
- B. **Licensed level.** If you are already certified, you will be required to take one exam (*Polity*). If you are not certified and going straight to licensed, you will be required to take all three (3) exams (*Bible Knowledge*, *Doctrine*, and *Polity*). All exams are taken

online, and you will be responsible for obtaining a proctor for any exams. The proctor must be an Assemblies of God minister who currently has the same credential you are seeking or higher. When the exams are completed and passed with a grade of 70 percent or higher, a date and time will be set up through your presbyter for you to be interviewed by the sectional committee.

We have collaborated with credential specialists around the Nation to make the following resources available to help prepare you for the licensed exam and interview. They vary in approach to help you find one that suites your unique style of learning.

- **Podcast:** Listen to the exam and interview coaching podcast for the licensing level at this link: www.agspe.org/advance2a.mp3
- **Q&A:** Examples of potential interview questions for the licensed level can be accessed at this link: www.agspe.org/advance2b.pdf
- **PDF:** General Council official study guide: www.agspe.org/advance2c.pdf
- **Interactive:** Pathway offers a free online interactive and guided study with other helpful resources for those that register at: <https://pathway.training/practice-test-for-credentialing/>
- **E-book:** Dr. Tim Laurito's free e-book entitled, *Glossolalia, Speaking in Tongues and Initial Physical Evidence*, will help you prepare for your credentialing exam and interview. You can access this resource at: www.agspe.org/GIPE_RMMN.pdf
- **Article:** To help you prepare for your credential interview, Pastor Rob Rocca breaks it down and explains the relationship between the baptism in the Holy Spirit, initial physical evidence, and the local church. You can access this resource at: www.agspe.org/CDD_RMMN.pdf

- C. Ordained level.** No exam is required for the ordination level unless you are transferring an ordination from another organization. An interview will be set up in January of the same year you will be ordained at Network Council. Your ordination interview will be done with the Executive Presbytery.

We have collaborated with credential specialists around the Nation to make the following resources available to help prepare you for the ordination interview. They vary in approach to help you find one that suites your unique style of learning.

- **Podcast:** Listen to the interview coaching podcast for the ordination level at this link: www.agspe.org/advance3a.mp3
- **Q&A:** Examples of potential interview questions for the interview level can be accessed at this link: www.agspe.org/advance3b.pdf
- **E-book:** Dr. Tim Laurito's free e-book entitled, *Glossolalia, Speaking in Tongues and Initial Physical Evidence*, will help you prepare for your credentialing exam and interview. You can access this resource at: www.agspe.org/GIPE_RMMN.pdf
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6. **Celebrate your progress!** Each year the Network celebrates the advancement of credential holders by recognizing them by name on the last night of our annual Network Council. Those newly certified and licensed ministers will be recognized by name and called forward to receive their certificates. Those who are newly ordained will be recognized, given the ordination charge and their certificate of ordination, and be anointed and prayed over by the Network Presbytery.

To access the latest credential information for the Rocky Mountain Ministry Network and its credentialing partners, please visit www.rmdc.org/credentials.