



TRINITY ORDINATION SCHOLARSHIP¹

Updated August 1, 2022

Superintendent Gene Roncone and President Paul Alexander of Trinity Bible College and Graduate School have created a formal partnership in which all RMMN ordained ministers will receive a 50 percent discount on tuition for graduate studies (MA or PhD). The RMMN will be offering a scholarship to qualifying ordained ministers as a benefit and reward for their credential advancement. It is our hope that this significant benefit will also encourage and incentivize ministers at the certified and licensed level to take the next step in their professional growth and credential advancement. Following is the rationale, qualifications, and answers to common questions about this scholarship.

A. Rationale for this scholarship.

- 1. Intentional investment.** The scholarship will invest in those whose preparation, calling, and ministry have been proven, blessed, and recognized by God and man. *And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man* (Luke 2:52 NIV). An ordained minister will have already progressed through each of the three levels of ministry endorsement:
 - **Certified.** They have shown promise of usefulness in the work of the gospel. See General Council Bylaws, Article VII, Section 3c(1).
 - **Licensed.** They have shown clear evidence of a divine call, godly character, preparation suitable for that calling, practical ministry experience, and an evident purpose to devote their lives in service to the proclamation of the gospel. See General Council Bylaws, Article VII, Section 3d.
 - **Ordained.** They have evidenced the biblical qualifications as outlined in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9), proven themselves effective in ministry, and been ordained by the laying on of hands. See General Council Bylaws, Article VII, Section 3e.

The scholarship will invest in those who have exhibited higher levels of theological preparation, commitment, credential advancement, and ministry maturity.

- 2. Increase capacity.** The opportunity will invest in those who have already proven themselves to be learning leaders. Ordained ministers will have already completed 30 classes, passed the necessary credentialing exams, been interviewed by credential committees, recommended by the Network Presbytery, and approved by the General Council for each of the three levels of credentials (certified, licensed, and ordained). *Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much* (Luke 16:10 NIV).
- 3. Enlarge potential.** This investment will release greater kingdom potential for ministry effectiveness, longevity and mentoring as well as widen our leadership pipeline. It will also create a greater appreciation for education and ministry preparedness among our network churches. *As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another* (Proverbs 27:17 NIV).

4. **Recruitment and retention.** Because excellence attracts excellence, this benefit will help us recruit and retain exceptional ministers. In a similar way, David's grand vision for Israel was inviting to others who said, *"We are yours, David! We are on your side, son of Jesse. Peace and prosperity be with you, and success to all who help you, for your God is the one who helps you."* So David let them join him, and he made them officers over his troops (1 Chronicles 12:18 NLT). The same can be true of our network as this initiative will increase the quality of leaders already in our network and position us to recruit new ministers to serve as lead pastors and staff in our RMMN churches.
5. **Incentivized advancement.** At the present time, most all the services our Fellowship and network offer are available to all our ministers whether they are certified, licensed, or ordained. The scholarship will provide a much-needed incentive for certified and licensed ministers to continue credential advancement and pursue ordination. Throughout history, incentives have been part of our covenant relationship with God. The Bible records many incentives to greater levels of commitment (Genesis 2:16-17; Exodus 19:4; 1 Kings 9:4-5; Matthew 5:12; 1 John 1:7-9; Revelation 21:7-8). The Apostle Paul also recognized the power of positive peer pressure: *Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds* (Hebrews 10:24 NIV). The scholarship helps us do that in a way that brings honor to God.
6. **Cultural engagement.** This scholarship will help our ministers apply practical theology to our contemporary context while engaging people in their community in a sensitive yet uncompromising way. Peter tells us our spiritual predecessors did the same thing: *Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently and with the greatest care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow* (1 Peter 1:10-11 NIV).

B. Trinity Ordination Scholarship Qualifications.

1. **RMMN ordained minister.** Applicants of the Trinity Ordination Scholarship must currently be credentialed and ordained with the Rocky Mountain Ministry Network or have completed an educational audit—having satisfied all the educational requirements for ordination, completed the interview, and await final approval from the General Council of the Assemblies of God.
2. **Ministry engagement.** Applicants of the Trinity Scholarship must be fully engaged in ministry within a local church on a weekly basis. They should be able to provide practical examples of using their gifts, talents, and time serving a local church.
3. **Superintendent recommended.** Applicants of the Trinity Scholarship shall obtain an official recommendation by the current network superintendent. That recommendation will be based on the person's commitment to learn, a maturity to handle critical thought, a sincere loyalty to the network, and a willingness to mentor younger ministers.
4. **Satisfaction of any prior educational requirements or recognition of special circumstances Trinity may require.**
5. **Completed application.** Applicants of the Trinity Scholarship shall complete and submit an application form to the district superintendent. To download an application to the download folder on your computer, click here: www.agspe.org/TOSApplication.docx
6. **Assistance in mentoring.** Applicants of the Trinity Scholarship must also be willing to make a commitment to mentoring younger pastors, be involved in network training initiatives, and

represent Trinity within the network when occasionally requested by the district superintendent.

C. FAQ: Frequently Asked Questions about the Trinity Ordination Scholarship.

- 1. Does the scholarship apply to resident students living on campus or just to students enrolled in the online program?** It only applies to online graduate courses.
- 2. If an ordained minister has already started a degree program, can they transfer to this program?** Yes, Trinity's Admissions office can review their transcript and help them understand what would be required to transfer to Trinity. Up to 21 credits can be transferred into Trinity's program from another Master's program.
- 3. Will there be additional academic requirements or prerequisites for those with a bachelor's degree?** If a person has an accredited bachelor's degree that DID NOT include 14-hours of bible/theology, then the Grad School Committee may require further admissions materials such as a reading list, previous credentialing classes taken, or sample sermons. The Grad School Committee usually waives the additional materials requirement for people with significant ministry experience.
- 4. In addition to the scholarship, will a candidate be eligible for any other financial aid through Trinity? If not, what financial aid would they be eligible for?** The 50 percent scholarship is the maximum scholarship awarded, and students will not be eligible for further financial aid from Trinity. However, Trinity does have 3-, 4-, and 5-year payment plans at 0 percent interest which make the program even more attainable. Students also have access to other private grants or scholarships outside of Trinity Bible College and Graduate School.
- 5. What steps should an interested minister take to apply for the scholarship?**

a.	Schedule a Zoom briefing call with the district superintendent.
b.	Fill out the application and email it to the district superintendent. The superintendent will evaluate the applicant and determine a response (yes, no, or wait).
c.	If approved, the superintendent will send an email of recommendation to the Admissions office at Trinity Bible College and Graduate School and copy the applicant.
d.	The applicant will begin the registration process with Trinity's Admissions team.

- 6. By what standard shall the 50 percent discount be calculated and renewed each year?** The scholarship shall be renewed each year provided the student meets all academic requirements and their student account is current. Extensions may be granted but must be formally agreed upon and approved by the school.
- 7. Are there any travel requirements throughout the duration of the program?** There are travel requirements for the MA Rural Ministries program and the MA Global Theology Program, but all other programs can be completed 100% online. The director of Student Services can provide a more detailed answer. Contact information is under number 16 below.
- 8. Will there be opportunities to interact with others who are involved in the program?** Yes, there is a vibrant on-campus community and a growing online community for people going through these programs.
- 9. What is the length of each program offering?**

Program	Length
M.A. Chaplaincy	3 years
M.A. Global Theology	3 years
M.A. Intercultural Studies	2 years
M.A. Missional Leadership	2 years
M.A. Rural Ministry	3 years
Ph.D. Practical Theology	4-7 years

10. **Will the scholarship be discontinued if a minister leaves the Rocky Mountain Ministry Network, resigns, lapses, or loses their credential with the Assemblies of God?** Yes, if you choose to lapse, resign, transfer out of the Rocky Mountain Ministry Network, or are dismissed, you will no longer be eligible for the scholarship. You may continue your studies at Trinity Bible College and Graduate School, but your tuition costs will no longer be discounted.
11. **How will this discount affect a US or World missionary or ordained minister (also qualifying as a PK or MK) that may already be receiving some other kind of discount from Trinity?** This will be determined by Trinity on a case-by-case basis.
12. **Is the scholarship limited to ordained ministers credentialed with the RMMN and living in Colorado and Utah?** Yes.
13. **How will the scholarship percentage be determined for ordained ministers/missionaries who have chosen to split their association with RMMN and their home district?** The scholarship shall be adjusted to reflect the same percentage of their tithe to the Rocky Mountain Ministry Network (25 percent).
14. **How does this scholarship compare to tuition rates of other graduate programs often associated with RMMN ministers?** Trinity's graduate program offers an M.A. and a Ph.D.
 - Trinity's M.A. Programs: Chaplaincy, Global Theology, World Religions, Intercultural Studies, Missional Leadership, Rural Ministries
 - Trinity's Ph.D. Program: Practical Theology
 - Cost comparisons with the Trinity Ordination Scholarship, not including fees:

School Rates	Credit Hour	Credits	Avg. Annual Cost	Total Costs
Denver Seminary	\$660	52	\$13,728	\$34,320
AGTS	\$565	45	\$11,865	\$25,425
Trinity M.A. ²	\$510	48	\$12,240	\$24,480
Trinity M.A. Discount 50%	\$255	48	\$6,120	\$12,240
Trinity Ph.D.	\$670	60	\$10,050	\$40,200
Trinity Ph.D. Discount 50%	\$335	60	\$5,025	\$20,100

15. **What if an ordained minister does not have a four-year degree? Will they have to get that first?** No! The Association for Biblical Higher Education (ABHE) accepts "alternative pathways" as a legitimate way to enter a graduate degree program. We emphasize this because so many ministers have incomplete degrees and/or a compilation of many informal courses or nonaccredited programs like Rhema and CFNI. A minister must be a mature 30 years of age to enter the program, have five years of ministry experience, and complete Trinity's for credit entry course entitled "Intro to Grad Studies." This alternative pathway is one of several reasons we have partnered with Trinity to open the door for scores of ministers to enter the formal educational process.

- 16. Who from Trinity will be our primary contact once a minister is approved?** The primary contact will be Matt Payne, Trinity's Vice President of Student Services and Director of Enrollment.
Matt Payne
mattpayne@trinitybiblecollege.edu
605-216-7707 (Cell)
701-349-5415 (Office)
- 17. How long will the Trinity Ordination Scholarship exist?** It is our hope that this scholarship will be offered indefinitely; however, the merits of continuance will be evaluated every five years.
- 18. Will there be an opportunity for students to walk in an official graduation ceremony?** Yes, since these are fully accredited degrees, the students will walk along with others at Trinity's graduation ceremony.
- 19. How will those who are approved for the scholarship be acknowledged once they graduate?** To increase the visibility of the Trinity Ordination Scholarship and motivate upward advancement of a minister's credential, graduates will be honored at one of the services during Network Council in addition to Trinity's graduation ceremony.
- 20. How can I get some answers to questions not addressed in this document?** Please reach out to the Superintendent's office of the Rocky Mountain Ministry Network at gene@rmdc.org.

¹This concept was a product of a one day brainstorming session of the RMMN Presbytery concerning how we can reward and incentivize ministers to seek the highest level of credentialing. This document is the product of an Advance Team consisting of ten individuals that worked through the initial development of this concept before presenting it to the full RMMN Presbytery. Members of the advance team were Gene Roncone (District Superintendent), Dr. Paul Alexander (President, Trinity Bible College and Graduate School), Phil Steiger (RMMN Presbyter), Dr. Charlie Self (RMMN minister and professor), Alex Lucero (RMMN Assistant Superintendent), John Bryant (RMMN Secretary/Treasurer), Louis and Heidi Franco (Utah ordained ministers with graduate degrees), Matt Payne (Vice President of Student Services and Director of Enrollment at Trinity Bible College and Graduate School), and Melanie Aragon (Credential Specialist for the Rocky Mountain Ministry Network and ordained minister). The document was then presented to the Executive Presbytery on September 1, 2021, for consideration and approval.

² Per Trinity's document entitled, "Tuition and Fees 2022-2023 Programs" at <https://www.trinitybiblecollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Tuition-Guide-2022-23-Website-Version-1.pdf>.