



# Ministry Standards in Transformation Ministries

Ordination  
Standards  
Council

Revised  
September 8, 2011

*“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”*

**Ephesians 4:11**

**transformation**  
MINISTRIES  
more healthy churches  
more changed lives

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**TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES**  
**MINISTRY STANDARDS IN TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES**  
*Revised September 8, 2011*

## 1.0 BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In the New Testament, ministry belongs to all followers of Christ. All Christians are called priests or ministers of God.

*But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. (I Peter 2:9)*

- The Holy Spirit is poured out on the entire community (Acts 2:38-39).
- Every believer has direct access to God (I Timothy 2:5).
- All of them offer sacrifices (Romans 12:1-2).
- All are involved in proclamation (II Corinthians 3:3).
- All minister to one another (I Corinthians 14:26).

- 1.2 The New Testament consistently speaks of a plurality of leaders (most often called elders or overseers) in the church, who together exercise leadership through the variety of their spiritual gifts and by the calling of Christ and His people. (Acts 14:23; 20:17; Titus 1:5; James 5:14; Hebrews 13:17; I Corinthians 12:28-31; and Romans 12:4-8)

- 1.3 However, from the beginning there were persons called to exercise on a continual basis certain public ministries of leadership in the Christian community, such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, and pastors.

*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service.... (Ephesians 4:11)*

*And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? (I Corinthians 12:28-30)*

- 1.4 The New Testament speaks of the office that is today most commonly called "pastor" using several words. The fact that several of these terms may be woven together in one passage reveals that they were used interchangeably in the early church to describe those who lead by the call of Christ's Spirit, a call that is recognized by the church.

- Pastor or shepherd (poimhn)
- Elder (presbuteros)
- Overseer or bishop (episkopos)

*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors (poimenav) and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service... (Ephesians 4:10-11)*

*From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders (presbuterouv) of the church... Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers*

(episkopouv). *Be shepherds (poimainein) of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. (Acts 20:17, 28)*

*Be shepherds (poimante) of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers (episkopountev) – not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. (I Peter 5:2-4)*

- 1.5 Our focus in this document is on the leader with the major teaching/preaching responsibility in the church. For simplicity sake, we will utilize the word “pastor” for this leader, although many passages apply to all who serve as elders.

1.6 Responsibilities entrusted to the pastor:

1.6.1 Govern or guide the church.

*The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. (I Timothy 5:17)*

1.6.2 Preach and teach all that God has revealed in Scripture.

*...devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. (I Timothy 4:13)*

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of... from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (II Timothy 3:14-17)*

*You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. (Titus 2:1)*

*You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus. ...I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. (Acts 20:20-21, 26-27)*

*...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. (Matthew 28:20)*

*For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good. These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you. (Titus 2:11-15)*

*But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been*

*justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. This is a trustworthy saying. And I want you to stress these things, so that those who have trusted in God may be careful to devote themselves to doing what is good. These things are excellent and profitable for everyone. (Titus 3:4-8)*

*But we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling-block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. (I Corinthians 1:23-24)*

1.6.3 Act as shepherds of the flock of God. (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2-4)

1.6.4 Protect the church against false, destructive teachers.

*Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears. (Acts 20:28-31)*

*Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. (Hebrews 13:17)*

*The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.... If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed....Command and teach these things. (I Timothy 4:1-11)*

*[An overseer] must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it. For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers.... They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach – and that for the sake of dishonest gain. (Titus 1:9-11)*

1.6.5 Proclaim the gospel of salvation.

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. (II Corinthians 5:17-20)*

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.... (Matthew 28:19)*

*...do the work of an evangelist.... (II Timothy 4: 5)*

1.6.6 Be an example of the faith you proclaim.

*Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. (Philippians 3:17)*

*...you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it.... We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. (II Thessalonians 3:7-10)*

*Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. (I Timothy 4:12)*

*In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us. (Titus 2:7-8)*

#### 1.6.7 Mobilize the church for its mission in the world.

*It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Ephesians 4:11-16)*

#### 1.7 Authority of the Pastor.

*Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. (Acts 20:28)*

*Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Hebrews 13:17)*

*The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you. (Titus 1:5)*

*These, then, are the things you should teach. Encourage and rebuke with all authority. Do not let anyone despise you. (Titus 2:11-15)*

#### 1.8 Responsibility of the church toward the pastor.

*... the worker is worth his keep. (Matthew 10:10)*

*And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!" (Romans 10:15)*

*I urge you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to join me in my struggle by praying to God for me. (Romans 15:30)*

*...the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel. (I Corinthians 9:14)*

*You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers, to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it. (I Corinthians 16:15-16)*

*Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. (Galatians 6:6)*

*Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. (I Thessalonians 5:12-13)*

*The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages." Do not entertain an accusation against an elder unless it is brought by two or three witnesses. (I Timothy 5:17-19)*

*Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.... Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Hebrews 13:7, 17)*

- 1.9 In light of the sacred calling of God, the great responsibilities involved in public leadership of the church, and the authority to be given to these servants of Christ, a process of spiritual discernment and careful examination involving both the body of Christ and others who are so called to leadership is essential.

*Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. (I Timothy 5:22)*

- 1.10 In the New Testament the authority of the pastor rests on Christ's call and the church's recognition of that call. Ordination is the church's recognition of God's call on the life of one of His servants to this ministry of leadership and teaching.

*Therefore, since through God's mercy we have this ministry, we do not lose heart.... But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. (II Corinthians 4:7)*

*While they were worshipping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. (Acts 13:2-3)*

*Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. (I Timothy 4:14)*

*For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. (II Timothy 1:6)*

- 1.11 Ordination is the setting apart of a pastor for the public ministry to which Christ has called him or her. It is not enough for the pastor to personally experience God's call. The Church must, by publicly recognizing God's call, confer the authority needed to carry out the task and release the individual from other responsibilities that would otherwise interfere. The laying on of hands symbolizes:

- The Church affirming God's call on the life of this servant, as a result of a process of spiritual discernment including prayer and careful examination;
- The congregation granting God's servant authority to protect and preserve the true Word of God;
- The body of Christ blessing this servant as he or she undertakes the mission;
- The community of faith offering this servant to the Lord as a living sacrifice to be directed by God's Spirit for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom;
- The Church praying for a fresh empowering by God's Spirit on this servant; and
- The Church identifying itself with the ministry of this servant from this day on. This church is commending and commissioning this servant to God's work within the larger Body of Christ and the world.

## 2.0 WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES RECOMMENDS A MAN OR WOMAN FOR ORDINATION?

- 2.1 Ordination follows an examination by the Transformation Ministries Ordination Standards Council, consisting of people who do *not* know the Candidate well or were *not* involved in the person's nurturing. Those involved in the Candidate's nurturing may be biased about the Candidate, and this bias may prevent the examination from being sufficiently rigorous. The purpose of the Ordination Standards Council is to examine the Candidate to see if the person is truly qualified.
- 2.2 The recommendation by the Transformation Ministries Ordination Standards Council that the local church proceed with ordination of a Candidate is an affirmation by the larger Body of Christ of the conviction within a local church that one of its members is called to and prepared for public ministry.
- 2.3 Because the recommendation for ordination comes from a Council representing the larger Body of Christ, the churches of Transformation Ministries are acting in concert through the Council and the Ordination Service to commend the Candidate to all the congregations as fully qualified for pastoral leadership.
- 2.4 Leaders who are called by God and recognized as such by the Body of Christ, have authority – God's authority.

*Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Hebrews 13:17)*

People in this office must demonstrate evidence of God's authority in their lives. This authority is exercised in servant leadership, modeled by Jesus Christ, the Chief Shepherd over all earthly shepherds. (1 Peter 5:2-4)

*You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Matthew 20:25-28)*

In recommending that the church proceed with ordination, Transformation Ministries affirms and recognizes this God-given authority.

- 2.5 When Transformation Ministries commends a person to the office of pastor/ teacher, this is an expression of the spiritual authority of Transformation Ministries as part of the larger body of Christ. If a pastor has not submitted to the spiritual authority of the Transformation Ministries churches, he/she should not lead a Transformation Ministries church.

### **3.0 WHAT ARE THE LEADERSHIP ROLES APPROPRIATE FOR TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES APPROVED ORDINATION?**

- 3.1 Ordination is appropriate for those who have a substantial preaching/teaching ministry in a church, parachurch or mission agency, or educational institution, including military chaplains. Therefore, Transformation Ministries will examine for ordination and recommend to the local church those who have a proven knowledge of Biblical truth and an aptitude for the communication of Biblical truth in their ministries.
- 3.2 Local churches may license or ordain persons with specialized ministries not requiring preaching and teaching (e.g., counseling, hospital chaplaincy, worship ministry). Transformation Ministries has recommended standards and procedures for local church license or ordination. However, these standards are to be measured by the local church, and the accountability of licensed or locally ordained individuals is to that local church.

### **4.0 WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES, SKILLS AND GIFTS NECESSARY IN A MAN OR WOMAN TO BE COMMENDED FOR ORDINATION BY TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES?**

*Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. (I Timothy 4:14-16)*

- 4.1 Clear witness of personal faith in Christ
- 4.2 Godly character
- 4.3 Knowledge of the Bible *and* submission to its authority
- 4.4 Biblically and theologically sound convictions
- 4.5 Spiritual Fruit
  - 4.5.1 Christ-likeness
  - 4.5.2 Kingdom results (souls won, disciples produced, healthy relationships, building up of the body of Christ, etc.)
- 4.6 Spiritual leadership
- 4.7 Spiritual gifts appropriate for pastors, such as:
  - 4.7.1 Leadership (ability to discern and cultivate God's vision within a congregation, and to move people on to God's agenda)

- 4.7.2 Edification (building up of the Church)
- 4.7.3 Pastor (care of souls)
- 4.7.4 Teacher
- 4.7.5 Prophecy (ability to proclaim the Word of God)
- 4.7.6 Evangelism
- 4.7.7 Administration
- 4.8 Vision for Christ's Church and his/her role in fulfilling that vision
- 4.9 Competency to lead Christ's Church in its mission in the world and to shepherd His people
- 4.10 Accountability to God, the local church, and the larger body of Christ. A mutual accountability relationship is envisioned.
  - 4.10.1 Accountability of the Pastor to Transformation Ministries
    - On-going peer relationships (Pastor Mentor Groups)
    - Life-long growth in knowledge, Biblical understanding, and skills
    - To the convictions, core values, and the Transformation Ministries *Leadership Covenant of Ethical Behavior*
  - 4.10.2 Accountability of Transformation Ministries to the Pastor
    - To come alongside the pastor who is leading a local church
    - To train mentor pastors and identify resources for peer mentoring groups
    - To assist in times of financial crises in pastoral families
    - To support and nurture ministry couples
    - To provide resources to develop leadership skills for both pastors and lay church leaders

## 5.0 WHAT EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIALS ARE REQUIRED OF PERSONS BEING CON-SIDERED FOR ORDINATION RECOGNIZED BY TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES?

- 5.1 What standard professional competencies must be achieved in order to be recommended for ordination in a Transformation Ministries church?
  - Comprehensive knowledge of the Bible.
  - Demonstrated mastery in the use of tools for life-long in-depth Bible study, exposition, and teaching (including either knowledge of Greek and Hebrew or sufficient mastery of tools to utilize insights from the original languages).
  - Knowledge of the history of Christianity in its global mission.
  - Understanding of the doctrines of the Christian faith, resulting in a comprehensive and consistent teaching of what God has revealed in Scripture.
  - Knowledge of Baptist history and theology.

- Demonstrated understanding and personal practice of spiritual formation, discipling, developing of believers in their personal walk with Christ.
  - Understanding and personal application of the dynamics of spiritual leadership to mobilize the body of Christ for its mission.
  - Understanding of and commitment to the mission of the church, evangelism, and Kingdom multiplication.
  - The ability to communicate the truth in a compelling way in the cultural context of the people with whom the pastor is working.
  - Understanding how to care for the whole person – body, soul, and spirit – including helping people in times of personal crisis.
- 5.2 Many will undergo training to achieve the professional competencies required for ordination by four years of college plus three years of seminary (B.A. and M.Div. degrees or their equivalent).
- 5.3 Others will undergo other kinds of training to achieve these competencies, such as Bible college or institute, mentoring by a qualified senior pastor, and/or full-time, effective ministry.
- 5.4 Meeting educational and/or experience requirements, and completing the ministry paper do not guarantee successful completion of the examination by the Ordination Standards Council.

## 6.0 TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES GUIDELINES FOR ORDINATION

As a partnership of many ethnically and culturally diverse churches, Transformation Ministries affirms the fact that different cultural groups utilize various processes or steps in credentialing pastoral leaders. The following guidelines anticipate that local churches will utilize processes that are appropriate to their cultures for licensing and local examination before sending a Candidate to the Transformation Ministries Ordination Council. The guidelines below are suggestive.

- 6.1 The purpose of the process outlined below is threefold.
- 6.1.1 To prepare the Candidate for success when examined by the Transformation Ministries Ordination Council.
  - 6.1.2 To engage local churches together in one of their most important tasks – credentialing ordained leadership.
  - 6.1.3 To train lay church leaders in Biblical knowledge and increase their understanding of the responsibilities of the pastoral office by their participation in this process.
- 6.2 Other processes that attain these purposes are acceptable.
- 6.2.1 **Licensing**  
The local church initiates process, licensing a Candidate upon observation of his/her ministry and calling, and after examination of the Candidate by the local church board.

## 6.2.2 Ordination Paper<sup>1</sup>

The Candidate will write an ordination paper, including:

- 6.2.2.1 A brief biographical statement including place of birth, family and marital status (including widowhood or divorce if applicable), and experiences important for personal development;
- 6.2.2.2 A description of how the Candidate became a Christian;
- 6.2.2.3 A description of how the Candidate is growing in the Christian life;
- 6.2.2.4 Description of the significance of the local church and the broader body of Christ in the life and growth of the believer;
- 6.2.2.5 A description of the Candidate's call to a preaching or teaching ministry;
- 6.2.2.6 Reasons for seeking to be recognized as an ordained minister by Transformation Ministries;
- 6.2.2.7 A summary doctrinal statement of from 1,500 to 3,000 words in the Candidate's own words, so structured as to demonstrate Biblical and pastoral competence addressing the following:

- The authority and reliability of the Scripture
- God
- The person and work of Christ (including the atonement)
- The Holy Spirit
- The human race and society
- Sin
- Salvation
- Sanctification and growth of believers toward spiritual maturity
- The nature and mission of the church
- The meaning and practice of Baptism and the Lord's Supper
- Eschatology (including the return of Christ, heaven and hell)

The Candidates shall substantiate their understanding of these important items with Scripture references in the doctrinal statement.

6.2.2.8 The paper will be accompanied by:

- A letter from the local church of which the Candidate is a member or pastor, indicating the action taken to recommend the ordination of the Candidate;
- A transcript from the college and/or seminary from which the Candidate is a graduate;
- A signed statement agreeing with the convictions of Transformation Ministries and Transformation Ministries *Leadership Covenant of Ethical Behavior*; and

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<sup>1</sup> In some cultural groups, the local examination precedes the writing of the ordination paper. The examination is so structured that it covers the areas outlined above, and the Candidate is asked to write a paper after successfully completing the local examination.

- A statement from the Candidate's pastor, recent former pastor, or ministry mentor, who is well qualified to indicate the fitness of the Candidate for ministry.

### 6.2.3 **Local Examination**

A local examination provides a unique opportunity to involve pastors as well as lay church leaders in discussion of key areas of Biblical teaching and doctrine. At the same time, it draws together leaders from congregations that minister in relationship with one another. By including pastors and leaders who are less familiar with the Candidate, greater objectivity is introduced into the process than could be achieved by the Candidate's own congregation acting alone.<sup>2</sup>

6.2.3.1 The board of the church requesting ordination will invite the pastor plus one other leader of churches with which the church is in association to meet with the Candidate to examine him/her regarding the subjects covered in the ordination paper, and issues related to competence in ministry and personal character.

6.2.3.2 The local examining council should include representatives of other Transformation Ministries churches, and may also include representatives of other evangelical churches and parachurch ministries with which the local church associates.

6.2.3.3 At least one (1) member of the Ordination Standards Council of Transformation Ministries will be part of this council.

6.2.3.4 Other members of the churches participating in the local examination, including the host church, may be invited as observers.

6.2.3.5 The delegates to the local examination may vote:

- To recommend the Candidate to the Transformation Ministries Ordination Standards Council, or
- To recommend that the Candidate complete further study or work prior to appearing before the Transformation Ministries Ordination Council, or
- To recommend that that Candidate not proceed toward ordination.

6.2.3.6 The recommendation of the Local Examining Body will be communicated in writing to the CEO/Mission Lead of Transformation Ministries.

### 6.2.4 **Bible Knowledge Test**

The Candidate will complete the Bible Knowledge Test prepared by the Transformation Ministries Ordination Standards Council. A grade of 85% correct answers is required before the Candidate may appear before the Ordination Standards Council.

### 6.2.5 **Emotional Assessment**

An emotional assessment for ministry by a Christian counseling agency approved by Transformation Ministries will be completed. If the Candidate is married, the pastor and spouse will participate together in this process. A

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<sup>2</sup> Candidates seeking only local ordination or licensing do not need to proceed beyond the local examination.

subcommittee of the Ordination Standards Council will review the assessment and report concerns or recommendations to the Ordination Standards Council. The subcommittee will include no less than three (3) members: two Ordination Standards Council members and a TM Team Member with the chair of the subcommittee chosen at the discretion of the CEO/Mission Lead.

#### **6.2.6 Oral Examination by the Transformation Ministries Ordination Standards Council<sup>3</sup>**

6.2.6.1 The report of the local examination, a copy of the Ordination Paper, and the report of the Emotional Assessment must be received at the TM Office not less than sixty (60) days prior to the next anticipated Ordination Standards Council meeting.

6.2.6.2 The role of the Ordination Council is to examine the Candidate's readiness for ordained ministry. It is not to examine the standing of the person before God; his/her worth or spirituality.

6.2.6.3 Candidates are encouraged to bring a copy of the ordination paper and a Bible with them to the examination, either of which may be consulted when answering questions.

- The Candidate must be able to respond to questions concerning conversion, call, character, convictions, and competence.
- Particularly in regards to competence, the Candidate must be knowledgeable and skillful in Bible content.
- The Candidate must be prepared to respond orally to basic Bible questions. For instance, a Candidate should be able to give the theme (major teaching) of any book in the Old or New Testament.
- The Candidate should be able to biblically defend all major doctrines of the faith. This would include being able to respond to the typical teachings of cults who confront our people at their doors.
- Key passages that are important in presenting the gospel and explaining basic Christian living should also be committed to memory. (Psalm 119:9-11)
- Ordination Candidates should have competence in Bible content that surpass the level of committed lay people in the local church. (II Timothy 2:15)

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<sup>3</sup> The Transformation Ministries Ordination Council consists of the members of the Ordination Standards Committee (OSC). The OSC includes the CEO/Mission Lead and the TM Team Member of Transformation Ministries plus fifteen (15) pastors of covenanting congregations. The OSC shall reflect the diversity of congregations covenanting with Transformation Ministries, including demographic, racial and ethnic composition, geographic distribution and size, and shall include both men and women. The OSC nominates and elects pastors to serve up to two (2) consecutive terms of three (3) years (who may be re-elected after one (1) year off the Council), and is empowered to establish the standards and processes for ordination, as well as the discipline and restoration of pastors. The chairman of the Ordination Standards Committee will be appointed by, and serve at the pleasure of the CEO/Mission Lead. The OSC is accountable to the CEO/Mission Lead.

## 6.2.4.4 Possible outcomes for the oral examination:

- Recommend that the local church proceed with ordination of the Candidate, or
- Recommend that the Candidate complete further study or work prior to ordination, or
- Recommend that the local church not proceed with ordination of the Candidate. (If the local church ordains an individual who was not approved by the Transformation Ministries Ordination Standards Council, the ordination will not be recognized by Transformation Ministries.)

## 7.0 TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES GUIDELINES FOR RECOGNITION OF PREVIOUS ORDINATION BY ANOTHER CHRISTIAN BODY

Recognition of ordination by another Christian body by Transformation Ministries is appropriate whenever a Transformation Ministries Covenanting Church calls, as pastor, an individual credentialed by another Christian body.

### 7.1 Requirements for recognition of ordination:

#### 7.1.1 Doctrinal Paper

The Candidate will submit a doctrinal paper including:

- 7.1.1.1 A brief biographical statement including place of birth, family and marital status (including widowhood or divorce if applicable), and experiences important for personal development;
- 7.1.1.2 A description of how the Candidate became a Christian;
- 7.1.1.3 A description of how the Candidate is growing in the Christian life;
- 7.1.1.4 Description of the significance of the local church and the broader body of Christ in the life and growth of the believer;
- 7.1.1.5 A description of the Candidate's call to a preaching or teaching ministry;
- 7.1.1.6 Reasons for seeking to be recognized as an ordained minister by Transformation Ministries;
- 7.1.1.7 A summary doctrinal statement of 1,500 to 3,000 words [in the Candidate's own words], so structured as to demonstrate Biblical and pastoral competence addressing the following:
  - The authority and reliability of the Scripture
  - God
  - The person and work of Christ (including the atonement)
  - The Holy Spirit
  - The human race and society
  - Sin
  - Salvation
  - Sanctification and growth of believers toward spiritual maturity

- The nature and mission of the church
- The meaning and practice of Baptism and the Lord's Supper
- Eschatology (including the return of Christ, heaven and hell)

Candidates shall substantiate their understanding of these important items with Scripture references in the doctrinal statement.

7.1.1.8 The paper will be accompanied by:

- A letter from the local church of which the Candidate is a member or pastor, indicating the action taken to recommend the recognition of the Candidate's previous ordination;
- A transcript from the college and/or seminary from which the Candidate is a graduate;
- A copy of the Candidate's ordination certificate, accompanied by a letter from the body granting ordination indicating that the Candidate remains in good standing; and
- Signed statements agreeing with the convictions of Transformation Ministries and Transformation Ministries *Leadership Covenant of Ethical Behavior*.

#### 7.1.2 **Oral Examination by the Transformation Ministries Ordination Council**

7.1.2.1 The role of the Ordination Council is to examine the Candidate's theological and practical compatibility with the beliefs and practices of Transformation Ministries. It is not to examine the standing of the person before God; his/her worth or spirituality.

7.1.2.2 Candidates are encouraged to bring a copy of the doctrinal paper and a Bible with them to the examination, either of which may be consulted when answering questions.

- The Candidate must be able to respond to questions concerning conversion, call, character, convictions, and competence.
- Particularly in regards to competence, the Candidate must be knowledgeable and skillful in Bible content.
- The Candidate must be prepared to respond orally to basic Bible questions. For instance, a Candidate should be able to give the theme (major teaching) of any book in the Old or New Testament.
- The Candidate should be able to defend biblically all major doctrines of the faith. This would include being able to respond to the typical teachings of cults who confront our people at their doors.
- The Council will examine issues related to theological and pastoral practice to ensure the compatibility of the Candidate with the convictions and practices of Transformation Ministries.

7.1.2.3 Possible outcomes for the oral examination:

- Recommend that the CEO/Mission Lead recognize the ordination of the Candidate, or
- Recommend that the Candidate complete further study or work prior to recognition of ordination, or
- Recommend that that the CEO/Mission Lead not recognize the ordination of the Candidate. (If the local church recognizes the ordination an individual who was not approved by the Transformation Ministries Ordination Standards Council, the ordination will not be recognized by Transformation Ministries.)

**8.0 TO WHAT STANDARDS AND WHAT BODY ARE APPROVED PASTORS ACCOUNTABLE?**

- 8.1 The Transformation Ministries Ordination Standards Council is charged with the responsibility of overseeing and administering pastoral discipline and reinstatement.

**TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES  
ORDINATION CHECKLIST of WRITTEN REQUIREMENTS**

**For Ordination Candidates:**

1. \_\_\_\_ **Letter from the Candidate's Local Church** of which the Candidate is a member or pastor, indicating the action taken to recommend ordination for the candidate.
2. \_\_\_\_ **Statement from the Candidate's Pastor**, or recent former pastor, who is well qualified to indicate the fitness of the Candidate for ministry.
3. \_\_\_\_ **Letter from the Seminary** from which the Candidate is a graduate giving a value judgment of the Candidate as to maturity and suitability for the Christian ministry for which ordination is sought.
4. \_\_\_\_ **Seminary Transcript** from which the Candidate is a graduate.
5. \_\_\_\_ **Signed Statement** indicating agreement with Transformation Ministries *A Confession of our Common Faith* for ministers.
6. \_\_\_\_ **Signed Statement** indicating agreement with Transformation Ministries *Declaration on Human Sexuality and the Church* for ministers.
7. \_\_\_\_ **Signed Statement** indicating agreement with Transformation Ministries *Leadership Covenant of Ethical Behavior* for ministers.
8. \_\_\_\_ Complete the **Bible Knowledge Test** administered by a senior pastor approved by a Church Resource Minister of Transformation Ministries.
9. \_\_\_\_ **Psychological Readiness Assessment Report** at a recognized Counseling Center (the cost of which will be borne by the Candidate).
10. \_\_\_\_ **Written documents from the Candidate**, which shall be typed and double-spaced:
  - a. \_\_\_\_ **Brief Biographical Statement** including the place of birth, family and marital status (including widowhood or divorce, if applicable), and experiences important for personal development. Be sure current address and telephone are included.
  - b. \_\_\_\_ **Description of the growth experiences** by which the Candidate became a Christian.
  - c. \_\_\_\_ **Description of specific ways** in which the Candidate **has experienced growth in Christian life**, awareness of others and understanding of the world.
  - d. \_\_\_\_ **Apologetic for joining a church.** If the candidate has been a member of another communion, explain the reason for desiring to change to Transformation Ministries fellowship.
  - e. \_\_\_\_ Description of the Candidate's **sense of call to a preaching or teaching ministry.**
  - f. \_\_\_\_ **Reasons for seeking recognition as an ordained minister by Transformation Ministries** specifically elaborating on Baptist polity, distinctives, and organization. (If the Candidate has not completed a course in Baptist history and polity, then a prescribed self-study course will be provided by the Church Resource Minister.)

- g. \_\_\_\_ **Summary Doctrinal Statement** from 1,500 to 3,000 words [in the Candidate's own words] so structured as to demonstrate Biblical and pastoral competence. Emphasis should be placed on important items in the Candidate's understanding of the authority and reliability of the Scripture, God, the person and work of Christ (including the atonement), the Holy Spirit, the human race and society, sin, salvation, sanctification and growth of believers toward spiritual maturity, the nature and mission of the church, the meaning and practice of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, eschatology (including the return of Christ, heaven and hell).

**Note:** Candidates seeking Ordination Recognition from Transformation Ministries need to complete steps 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 10, as well as provide a copy of the Candidate's ordination certificate, accompanied by a letter from the body granting ordination indicating that the Candidate remains in good standing.



**TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES**  
**CONVICTIONS OF TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES**  
 Adopted February 8, 2007 and Revised September 8, 2011

**A CONFESSION OF OUR COMMON FAITH**

Confessions in the Baptist tradition declare the church's faith with conviction, joy and freedom. Baptists historically emphasize the right of individuals to interpret the Scripture as led by the Holy Spirit, the priesthood of the believer, and freedom of religion. However, these do not mean there is an absence of doctrines that we cherish and believe. It is incumbent on believers to clarify the non-negotiables of our faith. The following affirmations by Transformation Ministries are an attempt to articulate such essentials in the midst of a pluralistic religious landscape.

We wish to clarify that salvation is God's free gift of grace and is received through simple faith in Jesus Christ and repentance of sin. Salvation is not the result of cognitive assent to doctrinal statements.

Confessions do not replace or supplement the Bible and its authority. Nor are they a substitute for the living, dynamic relationship, which we have in Jesus Christ. This confession attempts only to confirm some of what is central to the faith, and by intent it is silent on less weighty matters. It is our conviction that what is written here represents a consensus of doctrine, which will aid in guarding the deposit of truth, which we believe is revealed in Scripture.

We believe:

1. That the Bible, composed of the Old and New Testaments, is the divinely inspired Word of God, the final and trustworthy authority for faith and practice. It is to be interpreted responsibly under the guidance of the Holy Spirit within the community of faith. The Bible clearly reveals the essentials necessary for Salvation and the basics of how to conduct our lives. It is the true center of Christian Union, and the supreme standard by which human conduct, creeds, and opinion shall be tried. (*Deut. 4:1-2, II Timothy 2:15, 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21*)
2. That there is only one true and eternal God consisting of three co-equal persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (*Gen. 1:1; Duet 6:4; John 4:24; John 14:6-13; Gal. 4:6; II Peter 1:17; Psalm 2:7ff; Isa. 7:14; John 1:1-18; Heb. 1:8; Psalm 51:11; I John 4:13; Acts 5:3,4*)
3. That God created humankind in the Divine image. Through Adam's fall all became sinful, lost and condemned. Each human being by deliberate choice participates in sin and is in need of Redemption through Christ. (*Gen. 1:26-30; Eph. 2:1-22; Rom. 1:19-32; 5:12-21*)
4. That Jesus Christ is God's Son, fully divine and fully human, the eternal and pre-existent Word. By His death Christ made full atonement for our sins, and by His resurrection showed Himself to be the Lord and Giver of Life to all who believe. (*Heb. 1:1-3, 4:14-15; John 1:1-3, 14*)
5. That God offers forgiveness of sin and justification through faith in Christ Jesus apart from works. Such Redemption is received by human individuals as God's gift upon repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ. Through Christ the believer becomes a new creation, whose mind and will are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit from loving sin, to loving the Lord with all our heart, soul and mind, and loving all people as we love ourselves. (*Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Eph. 2:8-22; I John 1:6 – 2:11; Matt. 22:37-38*)
6. That the Church is a community of faith consisting of regenerated believers with Christ as Lord. Such believers claim a personal relationship to God through Jesus Christ, are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, follow the Lord in believer's baptism, share in the Lord's Supper, gather regularly for worship, and covenant for mutual edification and care-giving. (*Matt. 16:15-19; Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 16:30-33; I Cor. 11:23-26; Eph. 1:22-23; Heb. 10:23-25; I Cor. 6:19*)

7. That the Church is called to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and God's reconciling grace in the power of the Holy Spirit, inviting persons to receive salvation and follow Christ as His disciples. As disciples, we seek justice for all persons and the reform of society. (*Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Gal. 3:26-28; James 1:27, 2:8*)
8. That Jesus Christ will return visibly, at which time He will raise the dead and judge all people. Believers will enjoy eternal fellowship with God as they participate in the fullness of His eternal reign, while unbelievers will suffer eternal separation from God. (*Matt.24:29-31; 25:31-46; I Thess. 4:14-18; Rev. 20:4-6,11-15*)

## **DECLARATION ON HUMAN SEXUALITY AND THE CHURCH**

Because we are all wounded and broken people in need of the healing power of God's grace in Christ Jesus, and being aware of the confusion of voices pertaining to human sexuality, the following statement defines our common understanding for sexual behavior:

Transformation Ministries affirms the Biblical ethic of compassion, love and ministry to all sexually broken persons and the availability of God's grace to all that repent (Luke 5:30-32; John 8:1-11; I Corinthians 6:11).

We affirm God's gracious creation intent for both faithful lifelong heterosexual union for married persons and for committed celibate behavior for unmarried persons as the only Biblical options for human sexual conduct. All other sexual unions are clearly identified in Scripture as being sinful and destructive of persons (Genesis 1:27, 2:24; I Thess. 4:3-8; Heb. 13:4).

We affirm that all alternative sexual unions outside of heterosexual marriage including homosexual/bisexual practices, adultery, and fornication are sin. Such conduct calls for repentance and openness to the transforming power of God (Lev. 18:22, 20:13; Rom. 1:18-32; I Cor. 6:9-10).

Therefore, Transformation Ministries will take leadership in supporting and resourcing church based ministries to sexually broken people including gay/lesbian and bisexual persons which express the grace and love of God, which minister to human needs, and which offer God's transforming grace to all; and further,

Transformation Ministries will not recognize for ordination or recognize the preexisting license or ordination of any practicing adulterer, fornicator, gay/lesbian/bisexual persons, or any person that affirms endorses and/or celebrates non-Biblical sexual practices such as those stipulated above; and further,

Transformation Ministries will not accept churches into fellowship who ordain or have in ministerial positions practicing adulterers, fornicators, gay/lesbian/bisexual persons or those who affirm, endorse, or celebrate non-Biblical sexual practices such as those stipulated above; and further,

BE IT RESOLVED, that any church affiliated with Transformation Ministries that endorses, celebrates, or affirms adultery, fornication, homosexual and/or bisexual practices, or celebrates non-Biblical sexual practices will be given the opportunity to counsel with the CEO/Mission Lead. Should a church choose to remain in a state of defiance to the Biblical ethic agreed upon by this Ministry, the church will be indicating their desire to sever their relationship with Transformation Ministries and will be notified of this Ministry's acceptance and affirmation of the choice to end their relationship with Transformation Ministries.

I am in agreement with this statement: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## TRANSFORMATION MINISTRIES LEADERSHIP COVENANT OF ETHICAL BEHAVIOR

Adopted September 13, 2007 and Revised September 8, 2011

**Believing** that Christian Leaders are to set the highest example for Christ's followers (I Timothy 4:11-16);  
**Committed** to fulfill Christ's Great Commandment and Great Commission (Matthew 22:36-40; 28:19-20);  
and

**Because** the reputation of Christ and His Church demands a public witness above reproach....

**Therefore**, I commit my thoughts, attitudes and behaviors to represent Christ through the following disciplines of my calling:

1. **Leadership:** By His grace and Spirit, I will lead God's people with the spiritual authority which issues from a servant heart, godly character, and gifted performance. I will develop disciples of Christ and empower spiritual leaders for the Kingdom. (II Timothy 2:2)
2. **Purity and Integrity:** I will conduct myself with sexual purity and integrity whether I am married or single. If married, in covenant faithfulness I will, in my thoughts, words, and deeds, love and respond toward my spouse as Christ loves and responds to me. If single, I will commit myself to celibacy until I enter marriage. I will not neglect my family: I will express my love for them in my time, attention, affection, and respect.
3. **Spiritual, Emotional, and Physical Health:** I will endeavor to pray daily; to read, study and meditate upon God's Word; and to maintain other spiritual disciplines such as solitude, reflection, and fasting. I will keep myself mentally challenged through disciplined reading, attending seminars, and peer mentoring. I will keep myself emotionally and physically fit through proper eating habits, regular exercise, vacations, recreation, and Sabbath keeping.
4. **Confidentiality and Pastoral Care:** I will hold in confidence any privileged communication received by me during the conduct of my ministry. I will not disclose confidential communications in private or public except where in my practice of ministry I am convinced that the sanctity of confidentiality is outweighed by my well-founded belief that the parishioner/client will cause imminent, life-threatening or substantial harm to self or others, or unless the privilege is waived by those giving the information. Furthermore, recognizing I am in a position of relative power in my dealings with others, I will conduct myself as a servant to their best interests, with respect and responsible behavior. (Philippians 2: 2-5)
5. **Relationships in the Body:** I will avoid gossip, slander, and all such "evil speaking" in my communications. I will develop accountable relationships with one or more of my peers. I will speak well of fellow leaders within the Body of Christ. When concerns and conflicts develop, I will follow the admonition of Matthew 18:15-17 to bring all such matters to reconciliation and/or resolution. (Ephesians 4: 29-32, II Timothy 2:24-26)
6. **Financial Management:** I will handle my personal and ministry finances with honesty and responsibility. I will tithe to my church and its mission as an example of faithful stewardship. I will develop the saints under my care in their financial awareness and responsibility as stewards of God's resources. (Romans 13:7, Matthew 20:21)
7. **Facing my Failures:** I will risk exposing my own flaws and shortcomings as a fellow learner among the saints. When I fall short of this covenant, I will confess my sin, repent and depend on God's grace for healing and restoration. If such failure brings shame upon Christ, the church, or my marriage, I will withdraw from the ministry and place myself under the care of appropriate

counseling and pastoral leaders until such time as it is deemed advisable by Transformation Ministries for me to return to professional leadership. (James 5:16; I Timothy 4:19-20)

- 8. Departing in Grace:** When concluding service in a ministry, I will sever my leadership responsibility with the ministry, endeavoring never to interfere with the pastoral leadership of my successor or alienate people from the leadership of the ministry. I will agree to requests for pastoral ministry (e.g., weddings and funerals) among those I have previously served only after I have personally obtained permission from the current pastor.

As long as I am engaged in ministry with Transformation Ministries, I will be willing to reaffirm my support of this covenant, annually.

I am in agreement with this statement: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

