

## APPENDIX A

### SUGGESTED GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION FORM For LOCAL CHURCH LICENSE

#### GUIDELINES:

- 1) Candidate requests meeting with Deacons of the church of which the candidate is a member to discuss a request for licensing.
- 2) Candidate presents to the Deacons and congregation of which the candidate is a member:
  - A) Testimony of Christian conversion;
  - B) Conviction of a call to ministry;
  - C) Evidence of aptitude and fitness for ministry as the local church may require; and
  - D) Agreement to enter into covenant with the local church of which the candidate is a member to pursue additional preparation for ministry, and to perform ministry under the watch care of the church.
- 3) Upon approval by the church of which the candidate is a member, receive from the church a local church license valid for up to three years if there is no cause for withdrawal of the license by the church.
- 4) Before requesting renewal of the license by the local church, the candidate shall show to the Deacons and congregation evidence that item 2 above has faithfully been pursued.

APPLICATION FORM:

- 1) Meetings for an interview with:  
Deacons on \_\_\_\_\_.  
Congregation on \_\_\_\_\_.
  
- 2) ATTACH:
  - A) Personal Testimony of Christian Conversion;
  - B) Statement of Personal Call to Ministry;
  - C) Educational Preparation for Ministry;
  - D) Experience in Preparation for Ministry.
  
- 3) “I will agree under the watchcare of the Deacons of this church to enter into covenant with this church that I will actively seek opportunities for ministry and preparation for ministry as appropriate and in support of the mission of this church.”  
  
YES    NO    OTHER (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 4) “During the next three years, I will seek to meet the following goals:”
  - 1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 4) \_\_\_\_\_

10/19/01

GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION FORM for  
ABCOM COMMISSIONING

GUIDELINES:

- 1) Educational Standards for ABCOM Commissioning
  - A) The educational standard for ABCOM Commissioning is related to the ABCOM Institute for Ministry (AIM) certificate program or its equivalent. Equivalencies shall be determined by the Committee on the Ministry.
  - B) To receive an ABCOM Commission, the candidate have completed the following ten courses:
 

Mentored Practice 1	Mentored Practice 2
Ministerial Ethics	New Testament Survey
American Baptist History and Polity	Church History
Basic Christian Theology	Preaching
Old Testament Survey	The Practice of Ministry/Pastoral Care
  - C) To receive a renewal for ABCOM Commission, the candidate must continue to maintain a relationship with a mentor approved by the Committee on the Ministry and have completed at least four additional courses, focused on their particular ministry call from God.
  - D) Once a certificate of completion has been granted by AIM or its equivalent (determined by the Committee on the Ministry), renewals of Commission are based on continuing education.
- 2) Candidate must be prepared to present to the ABCOM Committee on the Ministry:
  - A) A currently valid local church license with evidence of at least one full year of satisfactory ministry approved by the licensing church.
  - B) Satisfaction of the Educational Requirements for ABCOM Commissioning (see above);
  - C) Reasons for seeking an ABCOM Commissioning to Ministry;
  - D) A paper of 6 to 8 typed pages detailing the candidate's conversion and call to ministry, and views on:
    - God
    - Jesus Christ
    - Holy Spirit
    - The Bible and its use
    - Baptism
    - The Lord's Supper
    - The human condition
    - Salvation
    - Eschatology
    - The purpose, place and mission of the church in today's society
    - The role of the laity
    - The role of the minister
    - Your commitment in support of American Baptist Churches
    - Your relationship to other pastors and churches
  - E) A signed copy of the current Ministers' Council Covenant and Code of Ethics (Appendix G)
  - F) A completed and signed copy of the Self-Disclosure and Release Form (Appendix H)
  - G) References from three persons, including one from the candidate's mentor; mentors must be approved by the AIM Mentoring Committee and fulfill the requirements of the Mentored Practice Program. (Appendix B.1)
- 3) In each fifth year after commissioning or renewal of commissioning, the candidate shall present to the Committee on the Ministry an "Application for Renewal," (Appendix B.2) which will detail the candidate's experience in continuing education and practice of ministry.
- 4) Receiving and maintaining an ABCOM Commission requires continuing membership in an American Baptist church.

APPLICATION FORM:

- 1) I request a meeting with the ABCOM COMMITTEE ON THE MINISTRY to apply for an ABCOM Commission to Ministry.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: Day \_\_\_\_\_ Evening: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Church Membership: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) Please ATTACH:

- A) A copy of current local church license;
- B) Transcript of at least 10 AIM Courses (or their equivalents);
- C) Verification of completion of a ministerial ethics course;
- D) Reasons for seeking ABCOM Commissioning;
- E) A paper of 6 to 8 typed pages detailing the candidate's conversion and call to ministry, and views on:
  - God
  - Jesus Christ
  - Holy Spirit
  - The Bible and its use
  - Baptism
  - The Lord's Supper
  - The human condition
  - Salvation
  - Eschatology
  - The purpose, place and mission of the church in today's society
  - The role of the laity
  - The role of the minister
  - Your commitment in support of American Baptist Churches
  - Your relationship to other pastors and churches
- F) A signed copy of the current Ministers' Council Covenant and Code of Ethics (Appendix G)
- G) A completed and signed copy of the Self-Disclosure and Release Form (Appendix H)

- 3) References from three persons, including one from the candidate's mentor; mentors must be approved by the AIM Mentoring Committee and fulfill the requirements of the Mentored Practice Program. (Appendix B.1)

- 4) Send to:

Secretary  
Committee on the Ministry  
American Baptist Churches of Maine  
PO Box 6149  
China Village, ME 04926-0149

- 5) Candidate will be contacted for a meeting date with the Committee on the Ministry after application review by committee representative and Area Minister.

Committee on the Ministry representative signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

APPENDIX B.1

REFERENCE FOR A PERSON SEEKING ABCOM COMMISSIONING

The ABCOM Commission to serve as a Christian Minister certifies that the credentials of the candidate have been examined and approved by the Committee on the Ministry. The Commission is to minister, whether in Pastoral Ministry (as Pastor, Chaplain, Administrator, Counselor, or other pastoral capacity) or in Specialized Ministry (in Christian Education, Youth Work, Music, or some other specialty). The ABCOM Commission will be granted for a period of five years and is renewable.

You have been asked to serve as a reference for \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

who is seeking an ABCOM Commission. Would you complete the questions on this form and mail your response to: Secretary, Committee on the Ministry, ABCOM, PO Box 6149, China Village, ME 04926-0149. We thank you for your cooperation.

Questions for person providing reference:

1. How long and in what ways have you known the applicant? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What are the applicant's strengths that will be an asset to the work of the Christian Church? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. In what areas of life or ministry do you sense the need for continued growth? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. How has the applicant demonstrated that he or she will continue in personal spiritual and academic growth? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. At this time, as the Committee on the Ministry considers this candidate's request, what is your response to the possibility of affirmative committee action?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Highly supportive                      \_\_\_\_\_ Supportive                      \_\_\_\_\_ Hesitant  
\_\_\_\_\_ Opposed                      \_\_\_\_\_ Not enough information to react

6. Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

Are you currently an AIM Mentor for this candidate: \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_\_no

10/23/09

10/09/01

APPENDIX B.2

APPLICATION FOR RENEWAL OF COMMISSIONING

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF COMMISSIONING: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF LAST RENEWAL: \_\_\_\_\_

MENTOR: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

1. List AIM courses and AIM approved course equivalencies since commissioning or last renewal. Four courses are required. (Please attach transcripts)

2. Detail other courses or continuing education experiences since last renewal:  
(Please attach copies of certificates of completion)

3. Describe ministry experience since last renewal.

4. Share current goals for continuing education and ministry:

Education:

Ministry:

5. Additional comments for the Committee on the Ministry

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Committee on the Ministry representative signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

10/24/08

GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION  
For  
ORDINATION RECOGNITION

GUIDELINES:

- 1) Educational Standards for Ordination
  - A) There are three education/experience tracks toward ordination.
    - 1) The educational standard for ordination is a four-year college degree plus an M. Div. degree from an American Baptist seminary, or its equivalent.
    - 2) An alternate track to ordination includes a combination of education and experience. ABC/USA standards require two years of acceptable pastoral service to be the equivalent of one year of college or seminary training. The maximum experiential equivalency which may be granted is six years, the equivalent of three years of higher education.
    - 3) ABCOM standards utilize the ABCOM Institute for Ministry for establishing another track to ordination. The combination of completing their certificate program or its equivalent and five years of acceptable full-time pastoral service meet the educational standard for this Region.
  - B) Educational preparation in all three tracks must include a course in American Baptist history and polity, and a course in ministerial ethics. The course in ministerial ethics will consider areas such as professional boundary issues, relationships, confidentiality, ethics in financial matters, and other related issues which can dramatically affect the relationship between pastor and people.
  - C) It is the responsibility of the Committee on the Ministry to determine the appropriate recognition by American Baptist Churches of Maine for all candidates for ordination.
- 2) Candidate must be prepared to present to the ABCOM Committee on the Ministry:
  - A) A currently valid ABCOM Commission;
  - B) Completed Application (Appendix C);
  - C) Completed Local Church Request (Appendix C.1) ; and
  - D) A signed copy of the Ministers' Council Covenant and Code of Ethics (Appendix G);
  - E) A completed and signed copy of the Self-Disclosure and Release Form (Appendix H)

OR

  - A) Proof of Seminary graduation with an M.Div. or its equivalent;
  - B) A currently valid license to ministry or ABCOM Commission;
  - C) Completed Application and Local Church Request (Appendices C and C.1); and
  - D) A signed copy of the Ministers' Council Covenant and Code of Ethics (Appendix G)
  - E) A completed and signed copy of the Self-Disclosure and Release Form (Appendix H)

AND
- 3) Give evidence of at least one year of satisfactory pastoral ministry within the American Baptist Churches;
- 4) Have prepared for the Committee an "ordination paper" of 6 to 8 typed pages detailing the candidate's conversion and call to ministry, and views on:
  - God
  - Jesus Christ
  - Holy Spirit
  - The Bible and its use
  - Baptism
  - The Lord's Supper
  - The human condition
  - Salvation
  - Eschatology
  - The purpose, place and mission of the church in today's society
  - The role of the laity
  - The role of the minister
  - Your commitment in support of American Baptist Churches
  - Your relationship to other pastors and churches
- 5) The Committee on the Ministry reserves the right to require candidates to undergo a comprehensive career and candidacy assessment program sponsored by or in consultation with an American Baptist related Career Development Center prior to the Committee's recommendation for an examining council.

APPLICATION:

- 1) I request a meeting with the ABCOM Committee one the Ministry to review my readiness for ordination:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: Day \_\_\_\_\_ EVENING \_\_\_\_\_

LOCAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PASTOR'S NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

- 2) Please attach:

- A) A copy of your ABCOM Commission or License to Minister
- B) A copy of your seminary degree (if applicable)
- C) A copy of your AIM certificate, or verification of equivalencies of other educational component (if applicable)
- D) Verification of completion of a ministerial ethics course
- E) Complete Local Church Request (Appendix C.1)
- F) A copy of your "Ordination Paper"
- G) A complete list (with dates) of pastoral ministry – at least one year must be in an American Baptist church.
- H) A signed copy of the Ministers' Council Covenant and Code of Ethics (Appendix G)
- I) A completed and signed copy of the Self-Disclosure and Release Form (Appendix H)

- 3) Send to:

Secretary  
Committee on the Ministry  
American Baptist Churches of Maine  
PO Box 6149  
China Village, ME 04926-0149

- 4) Candidate will be contacted for a meeting date with the Committee on the Ministry after application has been reviewed by Committee representative and Area Minister.

Committee on the Ministry representative signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

LOCAL CHURCH REQUEST  
FOR  
ORDINATION REVIEW

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Dear Committee on the Ministry;

Our Church, \_\_\_\_\_, has asked that I write and request an ordination review for \_\_\_\_\_. We believe that \_\_\_\_\_ has given evidence that God has gifted and called this servant into ordained ministry.

We recognize that ordination among our Baptist churches is a local church institution. We recognize also our significant relationship with others of like faith and practice. Therefore, we desire the recognition and participation of our wider family in this important time in our church's life and ministry.

At a meeting of our church on \_\_\_\_\_, we heard \_\_\_\_\_ offer testimony to a personal conversion, a call to ministry and evidence of being prepared for service among American Baptist Churches. We request that the Committee on the Ministry work with \_\_\_\_\_ until appropriate standards of recognition by American Baptist Churches are met; and that you inform us when you feel it is timely to continue toward ordination.

Sincerely,

\_\_\_\_\_, Church Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church

APPENDIX D

REQUEST FOR CREDENTIAL RECOGNITION BY ABCOM  
for  
ORDAINED PERSONS WITH ABC RECOGNITION

Dear Co-worker for Christ:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on the Ministry to develop a working relationship with those who are serving ABC churches in Maine. To enable us to serve you better, please fill out the form below and send it to:

Secretary  
Committee on the Ministry  
American Baptist Churches of Maine  
PO Box 6149  
China Village, ME 04926-0149

Thank you for your help and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Secretary of the Committee

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. General Information: Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Office \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of an American Baptist Church? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
Church and Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Educational Background:

a. Please list your academic and theological training.

School

Years Attended

Degrees, if any

b. Have you completed a ministerial ethics course?

If so, when, where, and by whom?

3. Recognition Received:

a. Have you been licensed to preach or serve in some other type of ministry?

If so, when, where, and by whom?

b. Have you been ordained or commissioned by a local church congregation upon recommendation of a duly appointed council?  
If yes, when, where, and by whom?

c. Where and when was your ordination recognized by the American Baptist Churches of the USA?

4. Please share any non-ABC denominational connections in the past.

5. Positions held: Please list the churches you have served.

<u>Church</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Denominational Affiliation</u>
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6. Please attach a signed copy of the Ministers' Council Covenant and Code of Ethics (Appendix G).

7. Please attach a completed and signed copy of the Self-Disclosure and Release Form (Appendix H).

8. Please attach a brief description of the theological themes that guide your present life and ministry.

Committee on the Ministry representative signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

RECOGNITION OF NON-ABC ORDINATIONS

Procedure for Those Whose Ordination is Not Currently Recognized  
by the ABC/USA Process and Standards

- 1) An ordained minister who desires ABC recognition shall appear before the Committee on the Ministry, by appointment with the secretary, for presentation of the case and credentials. No decision is to be made until the person receives a call to an American Baptist church or a recognized ministry in Maine, and is a member in good standing in an American Baptist church.
  - 2) The Committee on the Ministry counseling with the candidate will require that person's recognition be subject to the same standards that apply to those already ordained in ABCOM. Formal recognition shall be subject to a one year period of satisfactory ministerial service in an ABCOM church or recognized ministry. The Committee on the Ministry reserves the right to require candidates to undergo a comprehensive career and candidacy assessment program sponsored by or in consultation with an American Baptist related Career Development Center prior to the Committee's recommendation for an examining council.
- A) The candidate shall:
- 1) Present a letter of ministerial standing from the validating religious body, and a description of service with that body. Include why service with that body was discontinued. Provide three references from your previous ministry plus one from the ABCOM church currently being served.
  - 2) Present a written statement of reasons for desiring recognition by American Baptist Churches as well as your intention of loyalty and support of ABC.
  - 3) Include a statement concerning your conversion, call to ministry and view of Christian doctrine.
  - 4) Present a completed and signed Self-Disclosure and Release Form (Appendix H).
  - 5) Confer with the Committee representative or Area Minister concerning personal and educational background, including certification of education and with a course in American Baptist History and Polity and a course in ministerial ethics.
  - 6) Seek an appointment through the Secretary for interview with the Committee on the Ministry.
- B) The Committee on the Ministry will:
- 1) Inform the candidate of its action and recommend that appropriate service of recognition be held by the candidate's local church.
  - 2) Forward certification of its recognition to the local Association, the state office of ABCOM, and the Ministerial Leadership Commission, ABCUSA. The secretary of this Committee will provide the candidate with a letter signed by the Executive Minister stating that the candidate's previous ordination has been recognized, giving the date of the action. The name of the candidate will be listed appropriately in the Yearbook.

RECOGNITION OF NON-ABC ORDINATION

**APPLICATION:**

Dear Co-Worker:

Welcome to the American Baptist Churches! We want to share mission and ministry with you. It is the responsibility of the Committee on the Ministry to review credentials of those who choose to seek recognition of ordination by other American Baptist Churches.

Please become familiar with the procedure for recognition, and complete the application below. When completed, please forward to:

Secretary, Committee on the Ministry  
American Baptist Churches of Maine  
PO Box 6149  
China Village, ME 04926

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1) GENERAL INFORMATION:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of an American Baptist church? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

2) RECOGNITION RECEIVED:

A) Have you been licensed or ordained in some type of ministry?  
If yes, indicate when, where, and by whom.

B) Have you ever been refused recognition by an American Baptist church or agency?  
If yes, indicate when, where, and by whom.

3) EDUCATIONAL HISTORY:

A) Have you graduated from a high school? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

B) Please list your academic and theological training:

<u>SCHOOL</u>	<u>YEARS ATTENDED</u>	<u>DEGREE</u>
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4) MINISTRY WORK HISTORY:

<u>DATES</u>	<u>CHURCH</u>	<u>POSITION</u>	<u>DENOMINATION</u>
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5) PLEASE ATTACH:

- A) A letter of ministerial standing from the validating religious body;
- B) Names and addresses of selected references;
- C) A written statement of reasons for desiring recognition by American Baptist Churches, including your intention of loyalty and support of American Baptist Churches' mission and ministry;
- D) A 6 to 8 page paper detailing your conversion, call to ministry, and views of Christian doctrine, including:
  - God
  - Jesus Christ
  - Holy Spirit
  - The Bible and its use
  - Baptism
  - The Lord's Supper
  - The human condition
  - Salvation
  - Eschatology
  - The purpose, place and mission of the church in today's society
  - The role of the laity
  - The role of the minister
  - Your commitment in support of American Baptist Churches
  - Your relationship to other pastors and churches
- E) A signed copy of the Ministers Council Covenant and Code of Ethics (Appendix G);
- F) A completed and signed copy of the Self-Disclosure and Release Form (Appendix H);
- G) Evidence that you have had conference with a Committee representative or Area Minister and certified that you have had a course in American Baptist History and Polity and a course in ministerial ethics.

Committee on the Ministry representative signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

## APPENDIX F

### PROCESS FOR APPEAL AND BOARD OF REVIEW

#### **A: FOR THE CANDIDATE**

If a candidate believes that the Standards have been unfairly applied in determining application for recognition at the levels of ABCOM Commission or Ordination, the candidate may request a hearing before a Board of Review. This request may be made in writing to the Chair, Committee on the Ministry.

A Board of Review will be appointed, and chaired by the candidate's Area Minister. The candidate will be notified of a date and place for meeting.

The candidate will bring in writing a statement clarifying the appeal. Appeals can be received only that call into question the application of ABCOM current standards. The candidate may also name and bring an advocate in the process.

A decision shall be made by the Board of Review, and shall be signed by the Area Minister and appealing candidate. The decision shall be made as a recommendation to the Committee on the Ministry.

If the candidate wishes to appeal further, the process may be instituted through the Executive Minister and ABCOM Executive Committee or the ABC/USA Ministerial Leadership Commission through its Executive Director.

#### **B: FOR COMMITTEE ON THE MINISTRY**

**APPOINTMENT:** When an appeal regarding the application of standards of recognition has been filed by a candidate, the Committee on the ministry shall appoint a Board of Review who shall report to the Committee on the Ministry its recommendations.

The Board of Review shall consist of one person each from the candidate's local church, the appropriate association, the Ministers' Council, the Committee on the Ministry, and an advocate of the candidate's choosing. The candidate's Area Minister shall convene and chair the Board of Review, and report its findings to the Committee on the Ministry.

**ACTION:** The Board shall convene at a time negotiated with all concerned parties. The candidate shall bring in writing the appeal to be discussed with the Board. The Board is charged to respond to the appeal by applying the ABCOM standards of recognition in place at the time.

Their decision shall be in writing, signed by the Area Minister and candidate, and presented to the Committee on the Ministry as a recommendation.

**THE COVENANT AND CODE OF ETHICS  
FOR MINISTERIAL LEADERS OF AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES**

*Having accepted God's call to leadership in Christ's Church, I covenant with God to serve Christ and the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit, to deepen my obedience to the Two Great Commandments; to love the Lord our God with all my heart, soul, mind and strength, and to love my neighbor as myself.*

*In affirmation of this commitment, I will abide by the Code of Ethics of the Ministers Council of the American Baptist Churches and I will faithfully support its purposes and ideals. As further affirmation of my commitment, I covenant with my colleagues in ministry that we will hold one another accountable for fulfillment of all the public actions set forth in our Code of Ethics.*

- + I will hold in trust the traditions and practices of our American Baptist Churches; I will not accept a position in the American Baptist family unless I am in accord with those traditions and practices; nor will I use my influence to alienate my congregation/constituents or any part thereof from its relationship and support of the denomination. If my convictions change, I will resign my position.
- + I will respect and recognize the variety of calls to ministry among my American Baptist colleagues, and other Christians.
- + I will seek to support all colleagues in ministry by building constructive relationships wherever I serve, both with the staff where I work and with colleagues in neighboring churches.
- + I will advocate adequate compensation for my profession. I will help lay persons and colleagues to understand that ministerial leaders should not expect or require fees for pastoral services from constituents they serve, when these constituents are helping pay their salaries.
- + I will not seek personal favors or discounts on the basis of my ministerial status.
- + I will maintain a disciplined ministry in such ways as keeping hours of prayer and devotion, endeavoring to maintain wholesome family relationships, sexual integrity, financial responsibility, regularly engaging in educational and recreational activities for ministerial and personal development. I will seek to maintain good health habits.
- + I will recognize my primary obligation to the church or employing group to which I have been called, and will accept added responsibilities only if they do not interfere with the overall effectiveness of my ministry.
- + I will personally and publicly support my colleagues who experience discrimination on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, age, marital status, national origin, physical impairment or disability.
- + I will not proselytize from other Christian churches.
- + I will, upon my resignation or retirement, sever my ministerial leadership relations with my former constituents, and will not make ministerial contacts in the field of another ministerial leader without his/her request and /or consent.
- + I will hold in confidence and treat as confidential communication any information provided to me with the expectation of privacy. I will not disclose such information in private or public except when, in my practice of ministry, I am convinced that the sanctity of confidentiality is outweighed by my well-founded belief that life-threatening or substantial harm will be caused.
- + I will not use my ministerial status, position or authority knowingly to abuse, misguide, negatively influence, manipulate, or take advantage of anyone, especially children.
- + I will report all instances of abuse as required by law to the appropriate agency. In any case involving persons working in ABC ministry, I will also report the circumstances to the appropriate regional and/or national denominational representative.
- + I will show my personal love for God as revealed in Jesus Christ in my life and ministry, as I strive together with my colleagues to preserve the dignity, maintain the discipline and promote the integrity of the vocation to which we have been called.

*Signed* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date* \_\_\_\_\_

*10/23/09 ABCOM*

## SELF-DISCLOSURE AND RELEASE FORM

## AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF MAINE

## PREAMBLE

The American Baptist Churches of Maine has an outstanding record for maintaining the highest moral and ethical standards in the practice of ministry. This record of service reflects our commitment to “preserve the dignity, maintain the discipline, and promote the integrity of the vocation to which we have been called” (Ministers Council Code of Ethics). When any clergy person engages in misconduct, the church is brought into disrepute and all persons involved suffer. In addition, there can be legal repercussions from such acts of misconduct. Therefore, the American Baptist Churches of Maine is committed to taking any reasonable precaution to avoid such disrepute, suffering, and litigation. This Self-Disclosure and Release Form is a part of the program’s effort to minimize the occurrence of misconduct among clergy who serve among our churches. Your understanding and cooperation is deeply appreciated.

1. I have never been the subject of official disciplinary proceedings in any American Baptist Region that resulted in any of the following:
  - a. Censure  true  not true
  - b. Suspension of recognition of ordination  true  not true
  - c. Withdrawal of recognition of ordination  true  not true
  
2. No official disciplinary proceedings by a region, association, or church of the American Baptist Churches are pending against me at the present time.  true  not true
  
3. I have never been the subject of official disciplinary proceedings by another denomination that resulted in disciplinary action.  true  not true
  
4. No official disciplinary proceedings by another denomination are pending against me at the present time.  true  not true
  
5. I have never been the subject of official disciplinary proceedings by a professional association or guild that resulted in disciplinary action.  true  not true
  
6. No official disciplinary proceedings by a professional association or guild are pending against me at the present time.  true  not true
  
7. No civil lawsuit alleging actual or attempted sexual harassment, exploitation, or abuse; discrimination; physical abuse; child abuse; or financial misconduct has ever been successfully prosecuted against me, settled out of court, or dropped because the statute of limitations had expired.  true  not true
  
8. My driver’s license has never been suspended or revoked due to reckless driving, driving while intoxicated, or driving under the influence of controlled substances.  true  not true
  
9. I have never been found guilty of, pleaded guilty or no contest to felony criminal charges or had felony criminal charges dropped because the statute of limitations had expired.  true  not true



ABCOM POLICIES and RESOLUTIONS CONCERNING ORDINATION

- 1) “Candidates who are avowed practicing homosexuals will not be recognized by the Committee on the Ministry.” Voted at ABCOM Annual Meeting 10/15/83 as part of the adoption of “Standards.”
- 2) “The American Baptist Churches of Maine will not recognize the license or ordination of any avowed and practicing homosexual person.” Voted at ABCOM Annual Meeting 10/19/01 as part of “Standards” revisions.
- 3) Resolution: Affirm God’s Calling of Men and Women – Voted at ABCOM Annual Meeting 10/18/86

“Whereas, The Gospel of Jesus Christ liberates all persons, female and male, to serve in those ministries to which they have been called by God and for which they have God-given talents; and  
Whereas, for the church to be whole and effective in its witness, it must affirm both women and men of all races as full partners in its ministry; and  
Whereas, the practice of partnership between women and men can be most effectively taught in the home with the church’s active help; and  
Whereas, both men and women in church and society should share concern for strong family units; and,  
Whereas, Churches, as well as secular organizations should offer employment and opportunities for all women and men with equal compensation, recognition, and appreciation; and  
Whereas, men and women who now hold key leadership places in church and society have a special responsibility to act so that women have equal opportunity to move into these positions; and  
Whereas, Christian men and women have a special call to be advocates and models for children and youth, giving them consistent personal support and encouragement to prepare for positions of leadership in church and society; and  
Whereas, the church needs to use language that is in harmony with the partnership of women and men,  
Therefore, Be it resolved that American Baptist Churches of Maine, in light of Biblical standards and Baptist precedents, strive to enable its member congregations to affirm God’s calling of men and women to all forms of service in the churches and to provide opportunities for women and men to express fully their gifts.”

- 4) Policy Regarding Credentials of Pastors of Churches Leaving the ABC Family – Adopted by the Committee on the Ministry 4/11/88

“The American Baptist Churches of Maine wishes to be supportive and helpful to all American Baptist Churches pastors. However, when it is perceived by the professional staff of American Baptist Churches of Maine that a congregation is moving toward terminating its relationship with the ABC/USA:

- 1) An Area Minister will have a personal conversation with a pastor, and share with him/her our policy that the ordination credentials of a pastor whose congregation has left American Baptist Churches and who continues to pastor that congregation, shall no longer be recognized by American Baptist Churches.
- 2) The Secretary of the Committee on the Ministry will send a follow-up letter to the pastor, interpreting how the Church action relates to ministerial standing.
- 3) When representatives of American Baptist Churches meet with officers of the local church to discuss mutual concerns, the matter of ministerial credentials will be incorporated into the conversation.

As such time as a congregation votes to leave the ABC, unless the pastor clearly state his/her desire for new placement with in the American Baptist Churches, the Committee on the Ministry will withdraw recognitions of ministerial credentials.”

(over)

RESOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES OF MAINE  
DEFINING OUR UNDERSTANDING OF GOD'S INTENTION  
FOR THE EXPRESSION OF HUMAN SEXUALITY

We live in a time, not unlike times in the past, when there is much confusion over human sexuality, its nature and its appropriate expression. American Baptists have proclaimed themselves to be a people centered in Jesus Christ and committed to the belief that "All Scripture is god-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness..." (II Timothy 3:16 NIV). In the confusion of this day and age it is important that we give our world and our culture the instruction of Scripture in the area of sexuality; teaching it to ourselves and our children rebuking the world's false teaching, and correcting Christians who are confused by the many voices and opinions calling to them. Therefore we affirm as the clear teaching of Scripture:

1. That God, in His creative work, purposely and intentionally made us male and female.
2. That as part of that intention, described first in the creation accounts and reaffirmed by our Lord's own words, God intended that human beings would come together as male and female exclusively in the bond we label marriage, a relationship of love, commitment, and sexual intimacy between one male and one female.
3. That the relationship of husband and wife in marriage is a holy reflection of the relationship of God with his people.
4. That we have fallen far from God's ideal intention for us in this area as well as in all others.
5. That God makes clear in both the Old and New Testaments the serious nature of those sins which violate God's intention that the fullest expressions of sexual intimacy should be limited to the "marriage bed."
6. That Jesus, in dealing with our sinfulness in this, as well as in other areas, offers Grace and Forgiveness to those who repent and turn from behaviors which are outside God's intention for us.

Therefore:

1. We specifically affirm that the expression of sexual intimacy outside of the female/male marriage bond is forbidden by God.
2. We affirm that we, as the Bride of Christ, have the responsibility to proclaim this truth to our world and to offer Christ's grace and healing to all persons who struggle with sin in this area of life.
3. We confess that we have in the past acted without the love and compassion of Christ toward certain classes of sinners in the area of sexual sin.
4. We covenant to become churches that, as Jesus welcomed publicans and sinners, welcome into our worship all those who are seeking to know Christ. We further covenant to offer our love to all and our support and help in healing and renewal to all those who join us as repentant sinners seeking Christ's forgiveness and renewal of life.

Vote taken at 1995 Annual Meeting, October 18, 1995: yes-139; no-48; abstain-15.