



## **Called to pastoral ministry**

This document gives a detailed explanation of the gifts and skills needed by those whose primary vocational calling is to pastoral ministry within a Baptist context as well as outlining the application process involved.

## **CALLED TO PASTORAL MINISTRY**

The Baptist Union of Great Britain offers national recognition to those whose primary vocational calling is to pastoral ministry within a Baptist context.

### **WHAT IS PASTORAL MINISTRY?**

A minister will need to preach, lead worship, visit people in their homes and focus the vision and life of a congregation. Undergirding all of this will be a deep relationship with God.

A minister will:

1. need to be able to handle scripture and communicate its message and meaning.
2. need to be able to cultivate relationships with all kinds of people so that they are encouraged to walk with God.
3. need to be able to accompany people in times of delight, distress and brokenness.
4. model and lead God's people in evangelism and mission enterprise.
5. need to be able to work with others in ordering the life of the church and manage this when differences emerge with others.

### **PURPOSE**

The purposes of the recognition scheme are:

1. To affirm appropriate people in their ministry.
2. To ensure that candidates have achieved approved levels of vocational training and theological study.
3. To accord those who have so fitted themselves with the recognition of the Baptist Union of Great Britain and commend them to the churches.
4. To encourage people to enhance those ministries by all possible means and to lay upon themselves the disciplinary ideals of their calling.
5. To facilitate settlement

## **PROCESS OF APPLICATION**

1. In seeking to test a call to ministry an applicant will need to have been baptised as a believer, and will normally have been in membership of a Baptist Church for at least two years.
2. Applicants will need to talk with the local minister and local leaders. This may lead to a recommendation to the Association from his/her Church Meeting.
3. Applicants will need to be in touch with the Regional Minister who will offer guidance through the approach to the Association and Baptist Colleges.
4. If successful, theological and vocational training will normally follow. At the end of this the College will be asked to commend for ministry. If training has been gained in a non-Baptist College it is possible to candidate through the Residential Selection Conference. The Regional Minister will explain this.
5. On completion of College training and on commendation from the Association, the final test is a call from a local church. Once called to a local church pastorate, the newly accredited phase of training begins. This is normally for three years (unless the candidate has gone through the Residential Selection Conference). During this time a mentor will be appointed to accompany the Newly Accredited Minister through this time. Further studies will be required.
6. On completion of the probationary period, a further interview will take place in order to ascertain that the Newly Accredited Minister has made proof of ministry. When this assurance has been given, the Minister is transferred to Fully Accredited status. Ministers are encouraged to continue in their development through ongoing study and continuous reflection.

## **QUALITIES**

The following qualities will be looked for in those who apply:

- a strong Christian commitment;
- evidence of growth in Christian maturity;
- a compelling sense of call to ministry;
- a personality suitable for ministry;
- evidence of necessary gifts and graces;
- perseverance and an ability to see tasks through to completion;
- an ability to relate to people of all ages;
- an aptitude for learning.

## **FURTHER HELP**

We hope this gives relevant information. Further help and advice will be available from your minister, your Regional Minister or from the Ministries Team. The website will give telephone numbers as well as more details about the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

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Registered CIO with charity number 1181392

Jan 2020