

Credentialing:

Ministerial License(s)



Ministerial License (Vocational & Non-Vocational)

This credential is designed for those involved in a qualifying ministry and who desire to be aligned with and accountable to the EFCA.

The Vocational License is designed for those serving in qualifying ministry.

The Non-Vocational License is designed for those serving in a non-vocational ministry.

Both the Vocational and Non-Vocational Ministry licenses are renewable every 5 years. The Vocational Ministry License can lead to a Certificate of Christian Ministry or the Certificate of Ordination, which can be pursued within the third year of obtaining the Vocational License, or anytime thereafter.

Required Documents for Ministerial License (Vocational and Non-Vocational) (pdf copies to print and mail to your district)

- License (Vocational or Non-Vocational) Application
- Letter from candidate indicating his desire to be licensed by the EFCA
- Letter of recommendation from the church where the candidate is and if different, a letter from the church in which the candidate is serving. (See Character Assessment Guidelines)
- Record of attendance from the dean's office of the Bible school, seminary, or EFCA GATEWAY Theological Institute. If there has been no formal or non-formal education, please note that. (If a previous letter is on file, a second letter is not necessary)
- Written license thesis
- Minutes from licensing council
- Recommendation from the district board or credentialing council
- EFCA Minister's Profile
- Completion of EFCA Required Reading or completion of TEDS History, Theology and Polity course

MINISTERIAL CREDENTIALING IN THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF AMERICA (EFCA)



I. Rationale for and Benefits of Credentialing

The rationale for and benefits of credentialing are the following:

- A. recognition of God's calling to and gifting for vocational ministry,
- B. interdependency between the local church, the district and the national office, to ensure a commitment to and alignment of beliefs (Statement of Faith) and ethos,
- C. accountability to the local church and to the denomination, both doctrinally and morally,
- D. development educationally and personally, and
- E. confirmed legal status by the IRS (through EFCA).

II. Concept and Scope of Vocational Ministry in Scripture

Scripture clearly teaches that each believer has been given a grace-gift(s) in order to serve our Lord and His Church (Eph.4:7). In addition, some believers have received the call of God upon their lives for vocational ministry and have been given a grace-gift(s) for the task of preparing God's people to carry out the works of service which build up the body of Christ (Eph. 4:11,12). It is those in vocational ministry whom God Himself has chosen and appointed, whom the local church affirms, and who are subsequently recognized by the EFCA by the act of the laying on of hands (Acts 13:3, 1 Tim. 4:14, II Tim. 1:6).

III. Authority

- A. The ultimate authority over the credential is the EFCA Conference, with the Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS) serving as the implementational authority on their behalf.
- B. The Conference has given BOMS the responsibility of carrying out the policies, which is reflected in the structure.
- C. Those credentialed in the EFCA have been approved by a local EFC church, a district council (DBOMS) and the national BOMS. An EFCA credential is a denominational credential and is granted to candidates "in trust." This means the candidate is accountable to the Conference through the local church, and the credential does not belong to the individual.

IV. Requirements for Ministerial Credentials

A. General requirements for candidates serving EFCA Church ministries to be credentialed under the EFCA. A candidate must fulfill the following:

1. Must be a member in good standing of a local EFC church.
2. Must subscribe without mental reservation to the Statement of Faith of the EFCA and agree to reaffirm that conviction every five years.
3. Must be engaged in a vocational or bi-vocational ministry that qualifies for a ministerial credential.
4. Must demonstrate a cooperative spirit with the purposes and policies of the EFCA and a lifestyle consistent with biblical standards of Christian conduct.
5. Must be examined and approved by a DBOMS council or committee under the authority of the Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS), who gives final approval.
6. Must complete a prescribed course of study on EFCA Church history, theology and polity as directed by BOMS.
7. Must conform to EFCA policy concerning persons with a divorce in their background. The EFCA does not normally issue ministerial credentials to a person who has a divorce in their background. Any person who has been divorced, or who is married to, or anticipates marrying a person who has been divorced, must be granted a Divorce Policy Exception.

B. Requirements for individuals not serving EFCA ministries.

1. Those already credentialed in the EFCA who move to non-EFCA ministries and wish to retain their credentials must fulfill the following four requirements:
 - a. membership in a local EFC church;
 - b. accountability to the District Superintendent (or delegated district staff);
 - c. annual written ministry report to the Director of Biblical Theology and Credentialing (representing the Office of the President); and
 - d. attendance at a district or national conference every other year.

Should they fail to do so, they will be requested to submit their credentials to the Director of Biblical Theology and Credentialing.

2. While we do not normally offer credentials to those who are not serving in the EFCA, BOMS may approve an exception from time to time. Individuals who are serving non-ordaining bodies (some local churches not associated with a denomination and parachurch ministries) may be granted credentials through the EFCA upon meeting the “Requirements for Ministerial Credentials.” They must also fulfill the four requirements listed above (with the possible exception of membership in a local EFC church for those serving in local church ministry).

C. All definitions of language or interpretation of individual cases shall be solely delegated to BOMS.

D. Each credential is the property of the EFCA and is given to the candidate “in trust.”

- E. If one is no longer in a qualifying ministry, the credential must be returned to the Office of the President (OOP) to be placed “in trust for personal reasons.” If one deviates doctrinally from the Statement of Faith, the credential must be returned to the OOP to be placed “in trust” and depending on the determination of BOMS, could be listed as “in trust for disciplinary reasons.” If one experiences a moral failure, the credential must be returned to the OOP to be placed “in trust for disciplinary reasons.”
- F. When a person in good standing turns 65, the individual will be considered retired. This means the individual will no longer need to be in a qualifying ministry or reaffirm the Statement of Faith every five years. This person retains the credential for life unless there is doctrinal deviation from the SOF or moral failure.

V. Types of Ministerial Credentials

There are five types of credentials for ministry issued by the EFCA: Ministry License (Vocational), Certificate of Christian Ministry, Certificate of Ordination, Transfer of Ordination, and Ministry License (Non-Vocational).

In the credentialing process, there are four key matters ascertained of the candidate: calling, character, biblical/ theological (SOF) competency (according to the requirements for the appropriate credential), and pastoral capability.

Credentialing is an important way in which the EFCA comes alongside local church leadership and helps with alignment, doctrinal fidelity, moral purity and accountability of their pastoral staff.

A. Ministry License (Vocational). This credential is designed for those involved in a qualifying ministry and who desire to be aligned with and accountable to the EFCA.

A ministry license may be issued to candidates who are involved in a qualifying ministry. The requirement is that the candidate has the appropriate theological understanding of the Statement of Faith and alignment with the EFCA. Being approved for a license grants the candidate all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of an EFCA credential.

The license is the required credential for all pursuing further credentialing in the EFCA. It is intended, first and foremost, for those directly involved in local church ministry of teaching and preaching the Word and, secondly, for those who are indirectly involved in the ministry of teaching and preaching the Word, who engage in a ministry that is supportive of the ministry of the Word. In addition to pastoral ministries in the local church that are Word based and Word supporting in the local church (e.g., senior pastors, associate pastors, youth pastors, children’s pastors, administrative pastors, pastors of music/worship, etc.), there are others that are also eligible to pursue a license engaged in ministries outside the local church: seminary professors, chaplains, church planters, missionaries [church planters or teachers], institutional ministries, parachurch ministries, etc.

A ministry license will be issued for five years and, thereafter, is renewable (five-year renewable). One is not required to pursue the Certificate of Christian Ministry or the Certificate of Ordination, but can renew the ministry license every five years, in conjunction with the five-year reaffirmation of the Statement of Faith.

The ministry license is also required prior to being granted a Certificate of Christian Ministry or the Certificate of Ordination, which can be pursued within the third year, or anytime thereafter.

A ministry license is valid as long as the holder remains active in a qualifying ministry. If one is no longer in an EFCA qualifying ministry, then the ministry license expires. Should this person re-enter the ministry at a later date, BOMS will request re-examination before returning the credential.

B. Certificate of Christian Ministry (CCM). This credential is designed for qualified individuals serving in local church ministry whose primary ministry is in support of teaching and preaching the Word. It is also fitting for some whose primary ministry is directly related to the ministry of preaching and teaching the Word. In addition to ministries in the local church that are Word supported and Word based (e.g., senior pastors, associate pastors, youth pastors, children's pastors, administrative pastors, pastors of music/worship, etc.), there are others that are also eligible to pursue a CCM engaged in ministries outside the local church: seminary professors, chaplains, church planters, missionaries [church planters or teachers], institutional ministries, parachurch ministries, etc.

1. Requirements for Certificate of Christian Ministry: This credential may be issued to candidates who
 - a. are involved in local church ministry, with some exceptions,
 - b. have been called and gifted for ministry, which has been recognized and affirmed by the local church,
 - c. are within the third year of having been granted a Ministry License, or anytime thereafter,
 - d. have attained the level of theological competency, whether through formal or non-formal means,
 - e. have been approved by a district council (DBOMS) and BOMS, and
 - f. have been publicly and corporately recognized in a church service, in which the service consists of laying on of hands and praying over by the leadership of the local church and the District Superintendent or representative as the credential is presented to the candidate.
2. Preparation for Certificate of Christian Ministry: The candidate for this credential must have a Ministry License, and be within the third year of ministry after obtaining it, or anytime thereafter.
3. Tenure of Certificate of Christian Ministry: The Certificate of Christian Ministry is a bestowal of a trust upon those who are called by God to public ministry. This trust remains with the person as long as he/she continues in ministry and fulfills the standards of ministry as outlined in the pertinent sections above.

An individual who has a Certificate of Christian Ministry can pursue a Certificate of Ordination within the third year, or anytime thereafter, following the requirements for the Certificate of Ordination.

If a person leaves an EFCA ministry or an EFC church and transitions into a **non-EFCA** ministry, the person may retain the EFCA credential.

Should the person leave vocational ministry or cease to be a member in good standing of an EFC church, the certificate must be placed in trust with the EFCA Director of Biblical Theology and Credentialing (representing the Office of the President). Should this person re-enter the ministry at a later date, BOMS may request re-examination before returning the credential.

C. Certificate of Ordination (COO). This credential is designed for qualified males who serve in pastoral ministry in the local church whose primary ministry responsibility is preaching and teaching the Word (e.g., senior pastors, associate pastors, youth pastors, children’s pastors, pastors of music/worship, etc.). There are others that are also eligible to pursue a COO engaged in ministries outside the local church: seminary professors, chaplains, church planters, missionaries [church planters or teachers], institutional ministries, etc.

Ordination in the EFCA was defined by the 1990 Conference in the following way: “Ordination in The Evangelical Free Church of America is the act of publicly setting a person apart for Christian ministry by prayer and the laying on of hands by others in ministry and the leadership of the local church; thus recognizing God’s call upon his life; his gifts and training for ministry; his commitment to teach and preach the sacred Scriptures.”

1. Requirements for Certificate of Ordination. This credential may be issued to male candidates who
 - a. are involved in local church ministry, with some exceptions,
 - b. have been called and gifted for ministry, which has been recognized and affirmed by the local church,
 - c. are within the third year of having been granted a Ministry License, or anytime thereafter,
 - d. have attained the level of theological proficiency, whether through formal or non-formal means,
 - e. have been approved by a district council (DBOMS) and BOMS, and
 - f. have been publicly and corporately recognized in a church service, in which the service consists of laying on of hands and praying over by the leadership of the local church and the District Superintendent or representative as the credential is presented to the candidate.
2. Preparation for Ordination: The candidate for this credential must have a Ministry License, and be within the third year of ministry after obtaining it, or anytime thereafter.
3. Tenure of Ordination: The Certificate of Ordination is the bestowal of a trust upon those who are called by God to public ministry. This trust remains with the person as long as he continues in ministry and fulfills the standards of ministry as outlined in the pertinent sections above.

If a person leaves an EFCA ministry or an EFC church and transitions into a **non-EFCA** ministry, the person may retain the EFCA credential.

Should the person leave vocational ministry or cease to be a member in good standing of an EFC church, the certificate must be placed in trust with the EFCA Director of Biblical Theology and Credentialing (representing the Office of the President). Should this person re-enter the ministry at a later date, BOMS may request re-examination before returning the credential.

D. Transfer of Ordination (TOO). This credential is designed for qualified males who serve in pastoral ministry in the local church whose primary ministry responsibility is preaching and teaching the Word (e.g., senior pastors, associate pastors, youth pastors, children’s pastors, pastors of music/worship, etc.), and who have a valid Ordination from another ordaining denomination or local church.

Transferring one’s ordination to the EFCA reflects an alignment with and a commitment to the EFCA theology and ethos. It also puts one under the authority of and makes one accountable to the EFCA.

1. Requirements for Transfer of Ordination: A candidate seeking a transfer of ordination to the EFCA shall meet the “Requirements for Ministerial Credentials” (from the first page of this document). This credential may be issued to male candidates who
 - a. are involved in local church ministry, with some exceptions,
 - b. have been called and gifted for ministry, which has been recognized and affirmed by the local church,
 - c. have been in ministry in the EFCA one year,
 - d. have attained the level of theological proficiency, whether through formal and/or non-formal means, and
 - e. have been approved by a DBOMS council and BOMS.
2. Preparation for the Transfer of Ordination: The candidate for this credential must have an ordination from another ordaining body or a local church, and be able to provide the written paper, minutes and council decision for his ordination. An EFCA Ministry License is not a prerequisite.
3. Tenure of Transfer of Ordination: The Transfer of Ordination is the bestowal of a trust upon those who are called by God to public ministry. This trust remains with the person as long as he continues in ministry and fulfills the standards of ministry as outlined in the pertinent sections above.

If a person leaves an EFCA ministry or an EFC church and transitions into a non-EFCA ministry, the person may retain the EFCA credential.

Should the person leave the ministry or cease to be a member in good standing of an EFC church, the certificate must be placed in trust with the EFCA Director of Biblical Theology and Credentialing (representing the Office of the President). Should this person re-enter the ministry at a later date, BOMS may request re-examination before returning the credential.

E. Ministry License (Non-Vocational). This credential is designed specifically for those who are serving in a non-vocational ministry who require a credential to serve in that capacity (e.g., some chaplaincies, marketplace ministries, etc.). The candidate must meet the requirements set forth in “Requirements for Ministerial Credentials” (A., with the exception of 3,” must be engaged in a vocational or bi-vocational ministry”). The holder of this License may qualify for legal status to perform the ministries and functions of the pastor/teacher.

This license is valid for five years and is renewable for as long as the holder remains in active, non-vocational ministry. It does not lead to either the Certificate of Christian Ministry or the Certificate of Ordination.

If a person with a ministry license serving in a non-vocational ministry transitions into a vocational ministry, BOMS may request re-examination before transitioning to the ministry license (vocational).

VI. Process, Policies, Procedures and Accountability

- A. The specific process, policies and procedures pertaining to credentialing in the EFCA will be determined and implemented by BOMS, under the authority of the Conference.
- B. A credentials update will be given to the delegates during regularly scheduled Conferences.

Board of Ministerial Standing, April 30, 2013

EFCA CHURCH RECOMMENDATION LETTER



One of the requirements of the EFCA in our credentialing process is to have a clear letter of recommendation from the local church of which the minister in question is serving or attending. We firmly believe that recognition of a minister's call to service begins in the local church. In the EFCA we ask you to affirm the following in your letter for recommendation for a ministry credential, whether it is for a Ministry License, Certificate of Christian Ministry, Certificate of Ordination, or Transfer of Ordination. Believing that the local church is best suited to recognize a person's character and call to ministry, we are looking for a recommendation that confidently affirms this call of God.

Your recommendation should include statements to each of these points:

- that this individual is a member in good standing of your church and that this person is engaged in a ministry that qualifies for a ministerial credential.
- that this individual currently demonstrates the church leadership qualities found in the pastoral epistles of Titus and 1 Timothy and that your local church body affirms God's call on this individual life for Christian vocational or non-vocational ministry and can recommend them with confidence to other churches in the EFCA family. (If you desire a tool to aid in this recommendation, please see the following document: "Character Assessment Guides for Credentialing for an EFCA Ministerial Credential.")
- that to your understanding this individual's doctrinal beliefs and practices would fit into the boundaries established by the Statement of Faith of the EFCA and clear orthodox evangelical theology.
- that to your understanding this person has demonstrated that he will actively support the EFCA and will demonstrate the interdependent spirit desired in the EFCA.
- that your leadership board is sufficiently aware of this person's ministry history and character to state they are not aware of any moral failure in this individual's past history that would, if revealed, bring dishonor to the local church being served or to the EFCA as a denomination.
- that reflects the marriage status of the individual and (if married) their spouse. While a past divorce in either partner does not necessarily preclude credentialing, it is essential that the marriage status is known to the Board of Ministerial Standing so a proper review can be ensured and a divorce exception be granted if it meets the policy of the EFCA.

A clear letter of recommendation is required to be sent to the District Office before we can set a date for this individual's oral credentialing examination. This letter should be **sent by the chairman of your primary leadership board** and also **signed by each member of the leadership board**. Some might view this as a perfunctory role, but believing in the importance of the local church and its authority, I ask you to take the responsibility very seriously. I wish to remind you that this letter or recommendation is of vital importance in the credentialing process. Your understanding of and confidence in this individual's call to ministry will be part of the initial basis upon which a credential is given. When a credential is eventually issued, the name of your church will be on the credential in addition to that of the EFCA. It will be a recommendation to all others that we have together affirmed this person's call to ministry as an approved EFCA pastor. If you have any questions about this required letter of recommendation, please contact me at your convenience by letter, phone, or email.

MINISTRY LICENSE (Non-Vocational) APPLICATION



1. Before completing this application, please contact your district office for full info about the district credentialing process: <http://go.efca.org/resources/districts>
2. Send this application and the materials on the checklist to your district office to initiate the credentialing process. Items may be sent electronically. This is an electronic form (a pdf file that you can complete and save for emailing or print and mail).

NAME: _____ DATE: _____
mm/dd/yyyy

HOME ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

PRESENTLY SERVING (CHURCH OR OTHER MINISTRY): _____

MINISTRY ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ POSITION: _____

APPLICANT CHECKLIST OF MATERIALS REQUIRED:

Letter of intent from you indicating your desire and reason for this license.

Letter of recommendation from the church of your membership or a letter from the church or ministry you are serving.

Record of attendance from the dean's office of the Bible school, seminary attended or EFCA GATEWAY Theological Institute (if applicable).

Written thesis (recommend you send electronically)

Completed EFCA Minister's Profile.

The form indicating completed EFCA *Required Reading* or TEDS History, Theology and Polity course

Final Step: Send this application and all of the above to your district office.

DISTRICT CHECKLIST (to be completed by the your district and forwarded to the EFCA)

Minutes of the licensing council

Recommendation from the District Board of Ministerial Standing (DBOMS).

MINISTRY LICENSE (Non-Vocational) PAPER REQUIREMENTS



Overview

This provides information to assist you in preparing for the required thesis. Papers are to conform to the format or they will be returned for modification.

Ministry License (Non-Vocational) – This license does not lead to either the Certificate of Christian Ministry or the Certificate of Ordination. If a person with a ministry license serving in a non-vocational ministry transitions into a vocational ministry, the Board of Ministerial Standing (BOMS) may request re-examination before transitioning to the ministry license (vocational).

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF LICENSING

1. These requirements are an attempt to have more standardized papers with responses to the most critical issues given by all candidates.
2. The primary purpose of the license is to identify theological understanding and alignment with the EFCA. A ministry license will be issued for five years and, thereafter, is renewable (five-year renewable).
3. You will defend the biblical foundation of the Statement of Faith by responding concisely to the specific questions under the various articles under the “Doctrinal Section.” This will also be done under the “Pastoral and Personal Section.”
4. You are expected to demonstrate that you can interact faithfully with the text of the Bible, both in the written paper and the oral defense.
5. Unless arrangements are made for an alternative process, the paper will be presented in English.

SPECIFICS OF THE PAPER

1. The paper should be fifteen (15) to twenty (20) pages in length, double-spaced, full justification, using a twelve point font, Times New Roman.
2. Please quote each article of the Statement of Faith in the paper, single-spaced and bold, just prior to your written support. Please see the following link: <http://go.efca.org/resources/document/efca-statement-faith>
3. The majority of the paper will focus on the “Doctrinal Section.” The “Biographical Section” should include 1-2 pages; the “Pastoral and Personal Section” should include 2-3 pages; the “Doctrinal Section” should include about 15 pages. For example, a general breakdown for a 20 page licensing paper would be the following: 2 pages “Biographical Section; 15 pages “Doctrinal Section”; 3 pages “Pastoral and Personal Section.”
4. Be concise and precise. Substance is more important than volume. It is expected that the thesis will demonstrate competency in both theology and the use of language to communicate truth about God and the world. Please exercise care with regard to gender references and seek to avoid unwarranted exclusive language. It is recommended that you seek out a mentor who can help with both the biblical and theological content and the writing style and grammar of the paper.
5. State your convictions plainly without saying “I believe . . .”; save that for issues of personal opinion.
6. In writing your paper you have the option of either responding directly to the questions (using GATEWAY’s guidelines, “How to Write a Paper”) or using the questions as a guide to write what you believe about each article. In either approach, do not supply cursory, bullet point answers or responses to the questions.
7. Include references to biblical texts in your paper, not direct quotes from those texts of Scripture. References to biblical texts should be included in close proximity to assertions of truth being made. It is expected you will be able to reference key biblical texts from memory in your council.
8. Quotations from other scholars are to be avoided, or used minimally. Though you will consult, read and use sources, this is a paper expounding what you believe. Do not engage in plagiarism, either intentional or unintentional. It is a matter of integrity and truthfulness and speaks to your character. If discovered it will be addressed strongly and will affect your process of credentialing.

9. The paper must conform to these requirements or it will be returned to you for modification before the paper can be submitted to your District Council.

ADMINISTRATIVE

1. It is important that you contact the District Office to begin the licensing process.
2. The completed paper is to be sent to the District Office per their instruction. Your District may want both electronic and hard copies. Please check on and follow your District's procedures.
3. You will be required to defend this paper, including how the doctrine affects your practical pastoral ministry, with members of a council appointed by the District (cf. *Ministerial Credentialing in the EFCA* for the make-up of the council). Licensing councils generally last about one and one-half hours.
4. If you have questions concerning any part of this process, please call the District Office.

Paper

BIOGRAPHICAL SECTION (1-2 PAGES)

1. Briefly describe your own conversion to faith in Jesus Christ and, if married, the conversion experience of your spouse to faith in Jesus Christ.
2. Briefly give an account of your call to ministry and, if married, your spouse's attitude towards this call.
3. Briefly describe your preparation, both academic and non-academic, i.e. formal and non-formal, for credentialed ministry.

DOCTRINAL SECTION (15-16 PAGES) - 2008 EFCA STATEMENT OF FAITH

In this section of the thesis, you are required to relate your personal doctrinal convictions about the various elements found in the Statement of Faith of The Evangelical Free Church of America. As stated above, though the "thesis requirements" are in a question format, do not include the questions in your paper. Write your paper in prose, not outline form. You are not merely to answer the questions. Please include Scripture references that support the biblical and theological statements made in your paper, and list the references canonically (e.g. "God loves the world" (Jn. 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:8)) or in order of their strength of support, the strongest supporting verses first (e.g. "God is love" (1 Jn. 4:8; Jn. 3:16).").

God

1. We believe in one God, Creator of all things, holy, infinitely perfect, and eternally existing in a loving unity of three equally divine Persons: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having limitless knowledge and sovereign power, God has graciously purposed from eternity to redeem a people for Himself and to make all things new for His own glory.

1. What does it mean that God is creator and why is it important? Include your view of creation.
2. Explain your understanding of the being of God and the doctrine of the Trinity, including your understanding of the attributes of God.
3. Why is it necessary, or important, to have a working understanding of the nature and attributes of God?
4. What does it mean that God has "limitless knowledge and sovereign power" and what is its significance?

The Bible

2. We believe that God has spoken in the Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, through the words of human authors. As the verbally inspired Word of God, the Bible is without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for salvation, and the ultimate authority by which every realm of human knowledge and endeavor should be judged. Therefore, it is to be believed in all that it teaches, obeyed in all that it requires, and trusted in all that it promises.

1. Explain the terms "revelation," "verbally inspired," "ultimate authority" and "illumination."
2. What do you understand by the term "inerrant" when used of Scripture? How would you distinguish between "inerrant" and "infallible?"
3. How do you defend the canon, the Old and New Testaments, the 66 books of the Bible?
4. How does your view of the inerrancy and authority of Scripture affect specific aspects of your ministry such as study, preaching, teaching, counseling, leadership training, etc.?
5. How do you understand, and what is the implication of the last sentence in this article?

The Human Condition

3. We believe that God created Adam and Eve in His image, but they sinned when tempted by Satan. In union with Adam, human beings are sinners by nature and by choice, alienated from God, and under His wrath. Only through God's saving work in Jesus Christ can we be rescued, reconciled and renewed.

1. What does it mean that Adam and Eve were created in the image of God?
2. How do you understand the fall of humanity and its effects? What is the significance of being in "union with Adam?"
3. How do you understand "sinners by nature and by choice?"
4. What does it mean to be "rescued, reconciled and renewed?"

Jesus Christ

4. We believe that Jesus Christ is God incarnate, fully God and fully man, one Person in two natures. Jesus—Israel's promised Messiah—was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. He lived a sinless life, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father as our High Priest and Advocate.

1. Explain your understanding of the union of divine and human natures in the person of Jesus Christ.
2. What is the significance of Jesus being "Israel's promised Messiah," and why are the incarnation, the virgin birth and sinless life essential?
3. What was the nature of Christ Jesus' "emptying" in Philippians 2:7?
4. Explain your understanding of the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ.
5. How do you understand the present role of Jesus Christ?

The Work of Christ

5. We believe that Jesus Christ, as our representative and substitute, shed His blood on the cross as the perfect, all-sufficient sacrifice for our sins. His atoning death and victorious resurrection constitute the only ground for salvation.

1. What does it mean that Jesus is "our representative and substitute?"
2. How does the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ bring about our salvation? Include the concepts of expiation and propitiation.
3. What is meant by "salvation?" Include the concept of atonement.
4. What is the importance of the exclusivity of Jesus' death and resurrection being the "only ground for salvation?"

The Holy Spirit

6. We believe that the Holy Spirit, in all that He does, glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. He convicts the world of its guilt. He regenerates sinners, and in Him they are baptized into union with Christ and adopted as heirs in the family of God. He also indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers believers for Christ-like living and service.

1. What are some specific ways the Holy Spirit glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ? Include the concepts of regeneration and adoption.
2. How do you understand the teaching about the baptism of the Holy Spirit found in 1 Corinthians 12:13? What is the difference between the baptism, indwelling and filling of the Holy Spirit?
3. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit "indwells, illuminates, guides, equips and empowers for Christ-like living and service?"
4. Explain your understanding of the nature, purpose and duration of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. What is the fruit of the Spirit, and how does it differ from the gifts of the Spirit?

The Church

7. We believe that the true church comprises all who have been justified by God's grace through faith alone in Christ alone. They are united by the Holy Spirit in the body of Christ, of which He is the Head. The true church is manifest in local churches, whose membership should be composed only of believers. The Lord Jesus mandated two ordinances, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which visibly and tangibly express the gospel. Though they are not the means of salvation, when celebrated by the church in genuine faith, these ordinances confirm and nourish the believer.

1. Explain justification, grace and faith and how they relate to one another. How do these terms relate to "Christ alone" and the "true church?"

2. What does the Bible mean when it describes Jesus as Lord and Head of the Church and the Church as the Body of Christ?
3. What is your view about the necessity for and practice of baptism?
4. What is your view about the necessity for and practice of the Lord's Supper?
5. Explain the importance of the two ordinances of the church in the life of God's people.

The Evangelical Free Church of America is an association of autonomous churches united around these theological convictions:

1. How do you understand the statement "autonomous but interdependent congregations of like faith and congregational government," specifically focusing on "autonomous," interdependent congregations," and "congregational government."
2. Under Christ, how does the congregation function? What role do leaders have in a congregational form of government?
3. Why is congregationalism significant in the EFCA?

Christian Living

8. We believe that God's justifying grace must not be separated from His sanctifying power and purpose. God commands us to love Him supremely and others sacrificially, and to live out our faith with care for one another, compassion toward the poor and justice for the oppressed. With God's Word, the Spirit's power, and fervent prayer in Christ's name, we are to combat the spiritual forces of evil. In obedience to Christ's commission, we are to make disciples among all people, always bearing witness to the gospel in word and deed.

1. How do you understand the doctrine of sanctification? How is it related to justification?
2. What does it mean "to live out our faith?"
3. What is the church's responsibility towards the poor, aliens, and other disenfranchised persons?
4. How do you understand spiritual warfare, and what is the role of "God's Word, the Spirit's power and fervent prayer in Christ's name?"

Christ's Return

9. We believe in the personal, bodily and premillennial return of our Lord Jesus Christ. The coming of Christ, at a time known only to God, demands constant expectancy and, as our blessed hope, motivates the believer to godly living, sacrificial service and energetic mission.

1. Explain your understanding of the second coming of Jesus Christ, including your views on the tribulation, and a defense of premillennialism.
2. Why do you believe that Christ's return will be personal and bodily?
3. How do you understand "constant expectancy" in relationship to Christ's return?
4. How should views about future things affect the lives of those who believe in Jesus Christ?

Response and Eternal Destiny

10. We believe that God commands everyone everywhere to believe the gospel by turning to Him in repentance and receiving the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that God will raise the dead bodily and judge the world, assigning the unbeliever to condemnation and eternal conscious punishment and the believer to eternal blessedness and joy with the Lord in the new heaven and the new earth, to the praise of His glorious grace. Amen.

1. What is the Gospel message? What does it mean to receive the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you believe that Christ is the only way to salvation?
2. Explain your views regarding the eternal destiny of those who do not believe in Jesus Christ.
3. What happens to a person when he or she experiences death during this present age?
4. What is the biblical nature of Hell? Will it last forever?
5. How do you understand "the new heaven and the new earth?"

PASTORAL AND PERSONAL SECTION (2-4 PAGES)

Under “Current Doctrinal Issues” and “Issues Related to Life-Style,” please respond to each numbered item with 2-4 sentences.

Current Doctrinal Issues

Explain your views of the biblical teaching regarding the following topics and how those views affect your practice of ministry.

1. Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage
2. Abortion, Infanticide, Euthanasia
3. Role Distinctions for Men and Women in the Home and the Church
4. Homosexual Belief and Conduct (and other sexual perversions of God’s design for human sexuality)

Issues Related to Lifestyle

The candidate will state his views of the Scriptures and personal practices about the following:

1. Spiritual Disciplines
2. Stewardship, Personal Finances, and Debt
3. Moral Purity (Including Pornography)
4. Marriage and Family Priorities

ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH OF AMERICA: Please respond to these questions with a yes or no. If it is necessary to clarify your answer, please write a brief explanatory response.

1. The Evangelical Free Church of America purposely allows latitude in significant areas of doctrine (e.g. the age of the universe, Arminianism and Calvinism, the use of the gifts of the Spirit particularly the miraculous gifts, baptism, the Lord’s Supper, the tribulation, etc.). This has been referred to as the “significance of silence,” viz. we will debate these issues, but we will not divide over them. Are you willing to minister alongside those whose views differ from yours on nonessential matters?
2. Are you in harmony with the mission of the EFCA “to glorify God by multiplying healthy churches among all people,” as well as our distinctives? Please see the following link: <http://go.efca.org/explore/who-we-are>
3. Are you willing to live in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and policies of the EFCA? (This does not mean that you may not support a change to any of them through the proscribed process, cf. the next question.) Please see the following link: <http://go.efca.org/resources/document/bylaws>
4. Are you willing to follow and adhere to the congregational processes at the local church, district and national conference level in seeking changes in the programs or policies of the EFCA?
5. Is it your intention and desire to work in cooperation with the EFCA and the district in which you serve?
6. If at any time you change your doctrinal beliefs and/or find yourself in disagreement with the statement of faith and/or policies of the EFCA, would you be willing to surrender your credentials to the EFCA?
7. Is there any area or issue in your life which, if known because it has not been dealt with responsibly in a way that can be attested by spiritually mature believers, would bring disrepute on the Lord or the Church (drunkenness, gambling, plagiarism, pornography, racism, addictions, felony or “things like these” (Gal. 5:19-21))?

Add any additional personal convictions or comments relative to the previous sections that you believe would be helpful or important in the process of securing EFCA credentials.

Approved by the EFCA Board of Ministerial Standing – July 2009, updated August 2013



MINISTER'S PROFILE

(Please complete the entire form)

Date: _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Middle Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Home Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Office Address: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Home Phone Number: _____ Cell Number: _____ Email: _____

Married _____ Spouse's Name: _____ Date of Marriage: _____
Single _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)
Divorced _____

Children	DOB	Children	DOB
_____	_____ <small>(mm/dd/yyyy)</small>	_____	_____ <small>(mm/dd/yyyy)</small>
_____	_____ <small>(mm/dd/yyyy)</small>	_____	_____ <small>(mm/dd/yyyy)</small>
_____	_____ <small>(mm/dd/yyyy)</small>	_____	_____ <small>(mm/dd/yyyy)</small>

Licensed with: _____ Date: _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Ordained with: _____ Date: _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Presently serving (list church or organization and location:

_____ City/State: _____

Present Church Membership: _____ City/State: _____

Education

Name of School: _____ City/ State: _____
(Do not abbreviate)
Degree _____ Major _____ Date Completed _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Name of School: _____ City/ State: _____
(Do not abbreviate)
Degree _____ Major _____ Date Completed _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Name of School: _____ City/ State: _____
(Do not abbreviate)
Degree _____ Major _____ Date Completed _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

(continued on next page)

Ministry History

From(yyyy):	To(yyyy):	Church or Institution (Include City and State)	Position
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

Chaplain Yes No Serving at: _____

Branch of Service: Active Yes No Current Rank: _____

- | | | | |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| Air Force (active) | Army (active) | Navy (active) | Veterans Administration Hospital |
| Air Force Reserve | Navy Reserve | Army National Guard | Civil Air Patrol |
| State Military Reserve | Other _____ | | |

The Evangelical Free Church of America (has)(does not have) my permission to release the information contained in this document _____ Dated _____

(Electronic Signature Accepted)

HISTORY, THEOLOGY AND POLITY REQUIREMENT FOR CREDENTIALING



This certificate is to be included with your other credentialing material sent to your district.

Candidate's Name: _____
(please print)

Candidate's Signature: _____
(affirming completion of the above requirements below)

I have completed either (please check one): Option A Option B

Option A: History, Theology and Polity Course including Required Reading

Email (credentialing@efca.org) or contact your district office for information on the next available course. (This is the **RECOMMENDED** option.)

Date Completed

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Hanson, Calvin B., <i>What it Means to be Free</i> | _____ |
| 2. EFCA Spiritual Heritage Committee, <i>Evangelical Convictions</i> | (mm/dd/yyyy)
_____ |
| 3. Olson, Arnold T., <i>The Significance of Silence</i> | _____ |

Course Date: _____ Course Location: _____
(mm/dd/yyyy)

Name of Course Leader: _____

Option B: Required Reading for Independent Study

Books may be ordered from NextStep Resources (<http://www.nsresources.com>) or 800-444-2665

Date Completed

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Hanson, Calvin B., <i>What it Means to be Free</i> | _____ |
| 2. EFCA Spiritual Heritage Committee, <i>Evangelical Convictions</i> | _____ |
| 3. Olson, Arnold T., <i>The Significance of Silence</i> | _____ |
| 4. Olson, Arnold T., <i>Stumbling Toward Maturity</i> | _____ |
| 5. Olson, Arnold T., <i>The Search for Identity</i> | _____ |