



Mission-Focused Leadership Policy Belief Statement

The recent Theology of Ordination Study Committee (TOSC) consensus statement recognized that “Through the saving work of Christ” church members constitute “a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2: 5, 9) who are “given the ministry of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5:18-20), called, and enabled through the power of the Spirit and the gifts He bestows on them to carry out the Gospel Commission (Matt. 28:18-20).

In addition to recognizing that it is God who calls and chooses who He will to complete His work on this earth, the TOSC committee also agreed that over the years ordination “has acquired meaning beyond what was originally implied” in the Bible. On the basis of these findings committee members overwhelmingly supported two options that would allow for the ordination of women. In spite of this action, the GC session voted to not allow divisions self-determination regarding ordination.

While we desire to respect this vote, we also desire to live in harmony with Scripture and the Seventh-day Adventist belief that it is the responsibility of the Church to recognize those individuals whom the Lord has called and equipped for ministry in a local setting. We further desire to reconcile and live by the voted theology of ordination which is based in scripture but which our church policies do not allow. Thus we, the Washington Conference Executive Committee, have adopted the following policy for Mission-Focused Leadership.

VOTED: October 20, 2015

Commissioning vs Ordination

SUMMARIZATION OF NORTH AMERICAN DIVISION POLICY

COMMISSIONED MINISTERIAL CREDENTIAL	MINISTERIAL CREDENTIAL
May perform weddings and baptisms outside of district if authorized by the conference president and in situations crossing conference territories authorized as well by the local president of that conference.	Authorized to perform weddings and baptisms globally.
Excluded from organizing a church, uniting churches, ordaining elders and deacons or holding the position of conference president.	Permitted to organize churches, unite churches and ordain local elders or deacons. Hold any position within the denomination.
Procedure for Commissioning: Recommended by the conference to the local union for commissioning.	Procedure for Ordination: Recommended by the conference to the local union for ordination.
Authorization of commissioning can be withdrawn by the local hiring entity: conference, union or division.	Voiding of ordination by a conference is recommended to the local union who is authorized to act.
Must have been ordained as an elder and be elected as a local elder in the district where assigned.	Must have been ordained as an elder.
Commissioning is available to both male and female persons.	Ordination is only open to males.

Mission-Focused Leadership Policy for Washington Conference

1. That we continue to recommend both ordination and commissioning candidates to the North Pacific Union Conference Executive Committee for their approval.
2. That we give conference-wide approval for those currently holding Commissioned Ministerial Credentials to perform weddings and baptisms. And that we grant approval for those currently holding Commissioned Ministerial Credentials outside of our conference the same privilege.
3. That we give conference-wide approval for participation in the functions of organizing a church or uniting churches to those currently holding Commissioned Ministerial Credentials in consultation with conference administration as is practiced by those holding Ministerial Credentials.
4. That we give permission to those holding Commissioned Ministerial Credentials and who have been ordained as elders the privilege of ordaining elders, deacons, and deaconesses in their local church.
5. That we request that all individuals currently holding Commissioned Ministerial Credentials be granted ordination at a time when the World Church approves the ordination of men and women.
6. That both commissioned and ordained pastors be allowed to serve in any position of the Washington Conference including conference president.