

Constitution and Bylaws

The Ministerial Association of the Central Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church

Last updated, with all subsequent revisions adopted, at the CCMA Annual Meeting on May 3, 2024.

Article I. Name

Section 1.1. The name of this organization shall be "THE MINISTERIAL ASSOCIATION OF THE CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF THE EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH"

Section 1.2. This Ministerial Association shall be a part of the Ministerium of the Evangelical Covenant Church and shall conform in all matters of ministerial standing and discipline with the regulations of that body.

Article II. Purpose

Section 2.1. The purpose of this association shall be:

- a) To consider and act upon all matters of ministerial standing within the Central Conference, including the licensure, ordination, and commissioning of ministers, in accordance with the Rules for the Ordered Ministry and the Constitution and Bylaws of the Evangelical Covenant Church;
- b) To seek to raise the spiritual, ethical, and professional standards of the Ministerial Association;
- c) To strengthen the bonds of Christian fellowship among Covenant ministers;
- d) To render help to members of the Ministerial Association in times of special physical, personal, or spiritual need;
- e) To assist in the recruiting and selection of candidates for the Christian ministry and to work with North Park University and Theological Seminary in the matriculation of students in the university and seminary.

Article III. Membership

Section 3.1. Membership in this Ministerial Association shall consist of all ministers residing within the boundaries of the Central Conference who have standing according to the rules and regulations of the Board of the Ordered Ministry of The Evangelical Covenant Church.

Section 3.2. Membership in this Ministerial Association shall be of two kinds:

- a) Full membership, in which all privileges shall be accorded:
 - 1) Ministers who hold permanent credentials in the Covenant:
 - Ordained to Word and Sacrament (OWSa)
 - Ordained to Word and Service (OWSe)
 - Commissioned staff minister (CSM)
 - Consecrated Missionary (CM)
 - 2) Ministers who hold the following renewable credentials:
 - Ministry License (ML)
 - Bi-Vocational Ministry License (BVL)
 - Global Service License (GSL)
- b) Associate membership, in which voting privileges and holding of office are not accorded:
 - 1) Ordained or commissioned ministers in the inactive category
 - 2) Ordained or commissioned ministers on leave of absence
 - 3) Ministers serving Covenant churches but who do not hold Covenant credentials.

Section 3.3. Persons who are retired retain their membership in the Ministerial Association, including:

- 1) Ordained to Word and Sacrament - OWSa/R
- 2) Ordained to Word and Service - OWSe/R
- 3) Covenant Missionaries - CM/R

4) Commissioned Staff Ministers - CSM/R

Retirement does not involve reaching an age (e.g. 65), but officially requesting through Ordered Ministry that one's standing be moved to "retired".

Section 3.4. It shall be the duty as well as the privilege of every full member to attend the annual meeting. If any member shall be unable to do so, it shall be his or her duty to send a letter of greeting to the annual meeting.

- a) It shall be the duty of every full member to pay to the Ministerial Association treasurer annual membership dues as determined by the Ministerium and the Ministerial Association, and to maintain other indicators of good standing. Retired members shall be excused from this duty.
- b) It shall be the duty of every full member to maintain good standing in the Covenant Ministerium. Good Standing consists of:
 - i) Payment of Dues
 - ii) A current (within 3 years) Covenant Profile
 - iii) Annual Completion of the Vocational Growth Tool
 - iv) Regular Healthy Connections with ECC colleagues
- c) Any member who shall willfully disregard these/their duties to the Ministerial Association for two consecutive years may be subject to disciplinary action.
- d) In order to vote or hold office in the Central Conference, one must be in Good Standing.

Article IV. Officers

Section 4.1. The officers of this association, elected from among its full members, shall be chair, vice-chair, secretary, vice-secretary, and treasurer. The chair and vice-chair must hold ordination in the Covenant.

Section 4.2. These officers, together with the Conference Superintendent and an Associate Superintendent shall constitute the executive committee of the Ministerial Association.

Section 4.3. Officers serving on this executive committee shall function from the close of the annual meeting at which they were elected to the close of the annual meeting at which their term expires. The immediate past chair of the Ministerial Association shall be an advisor to the executive committee for one year following the completion of that person's term of office.

Article V. Meetings

Section 5.1. The annual meeting of this association shall be held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Central Conference of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Section 5.2. Business sessions shall be conducted according to the most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, except as otherwise provided in this constitution and bylaws.

Section 5.3. One-half of those members of the Ministerial Association who are registered at an annual meeting of the Ministerial Association shall constitute a quorum for business sessions at that annual meeting.

Article VI. Amendments

Section 6.1. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting at any annual meeting of the Ministerial Association, provided that the amendment has been proposed at the previous annual meeting.

BYLAWS

Article 1. Election

Section 1.1 The chair shall appoint a nominating committee of three members at least 30 days in advance of the annual meeting. This committee shall present to the annual meeting a ballot with at least one candidate for each opening. Two candidates would be preferred.

Section 1.2. All officers shall be elected for a term of three years. No member of the Executive Committee shall succeed himself/herself in the same office. The election of officers is to be staggered so that the chair and vice-secretary are elected one year, vice chair and secretary are elected the next year, and treasurer is elected the next year.

Section 1.3 In case of a vacancy due to resignation or death, a person shall be elected at the next annual meeting of the Ministerial Association to fill the remainder of the vacated term. A person who serves more than one-half of the term shall not be eligible for re-election to the committee.

Article 2. Committees

Section 2.1. The Committee on Ministerial Standing shall consist of seven elected members, at least three of whom shall be ordained to Word and Sacrament by the Evangelical Covenant Church. One member shall be either commissioned or ordained to Word and Service by the Evangelical Covenant Church. It is preferred that one of the members be a full time faculty member at North Park Theological Seminary. At the annual meeting of the Ministerial Association the members shall be elected for five-year terms in such a manner that no more than two terms shall expire each year. In case of a vacancy due to resignation or death a person shall be elected at the next annual meeting of the Ministerial Association to fill the remainder of the vacated term. A person who serves more than one-half of the term shall not be eligible for re-election to the committee. A chair and secretary shall be chosen by the committee. Ex-officio members of the Committee on Ministerial Standing will be the Central Conference Superintendent, an Associate Superintendent and the chair of the Central Conference Ministerial Association. A member of the Board of the Ordered Ministry from the Central Conference shall serve as an advisor to the committee. The committee shall follow the Rules for the Ordered Ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church and the constitution and bylaws of this association.

Section 2.2. All other committees shall be appointed by the chair as needed unless the annual meeting otherwise designates.

Article III. Ministerial Standing and Discipline

Section 3.1. All matters related to ordination, commissioning, and licensure shall be referred to the Committee on Ministerial Standing for consideration and recommendation before being brought to the annual meeting of this association for discussion or decision.

Section 3.2. The secretary of this association shall submit a report of all recommendations and decisions of the annual meeting regarding ministerial standing to the Board of the Ordered Ministry.

Section 3.3. A minister charged with indiscretion, immorality, doctrinal error, unethical behavior, or disloyalty to the Covenant, will be disciplined by action in accordance with the Rules for the Ordered Ministry of the Evangelical Covenant Church.

Article IV. Dues

Section 4.1. The amount and manner of payment of dues shall be determined by the annual meeting of this association.

Article V. Amendments

Section 5.1. Amendments to these Bylaws may be made at any annual meeting of this association by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.