

Church of the Brethren *(May 2024)*
Continuing Education Annual Report Form for Ministerial Leaders

Basic Information

Name _____ Date Report Submitted _____
 Ministry Setting _____ District _____
 Total Years of Ministerial Service _____ Years in Current Position _____ Ministerial Ethics Training: _____ Date _____ Location _____
 Sabbath Rest contracted with church/agency you are serving? ___ Yes ___ No If “yes,” anticipated year of next Sabbath Rest _____

Continuing Education Information

List continuing education events singly, providing all information requested in the appropriate spaces:

Name of Event	Date/Place	Main Topic/Keynote Leader	Sponsoring Agency/Institution	# of CEU's Equivalent Hours	Focus Area

IMPORTANT: Attach photocopies of C.E.U. Certificates AND copies of written reports.

Submit all material to 1) Congregational Leadership and 2) District Office. Keep a copy for your records.

Total # of CEU's _____

Page _____ **of** _____ **pages submitted**

Excerpts from Church of the Brethren Annual Conference “Guidelines: Continuing Education”

Continuing Education Units (CEUs)

One (1) CEU is equal to ten (10) contact/instruction hours of work offered by a recognized entity of the Church of the Brethren: Bethany Theological Seminary, The Mission and Ministry Board, Brethren Academy for Ministerial Leadership, Brethren Benefit Trust, On Earth Peace, Academy Certified Training Systems (ACTS) and the Districts, as well as other qualified organizations. While not all CEUs must come from a Brethren entity, the unique perspective that emphasizes the distinctive Brethren heritage, theology, and identity is valuable...Not all non-Brethren organizations guarantee quality education that is compatible with the values and heritage of the Church of the Brethren. Therefore, it is imperative that the minister consult with the appropriate leaders of the congregation and District Executive staff as continuing education plans are developed.

A ministerial leader is expected to work toward CEUs in at least five (5) of the focus areas listed below during the five-year interval between credentialing reviews. A full-time ministerial leader is expected to earn a minimum of five (5) CEUs (50 contact hours) in the five-year period. Ministerial leaders serving less than full-time service are expected to earn the part-time equivalent of those five (5) CEUs in the same time period.

Continuing Education Focus Areas

- 1. Biblical Studies.** The scriptures are foundational in every aspect of the church’s life. The need for biblical study does not end when one has graduated and been ordained. Research and archaeological discoveries are constantly shedding new light on old truths, and a well-informed pastoral leader is a blessing to the people of God who gather regularly for worship, fellowship, and service.
- 2. Evangelism and Church Growth.** Evangelism is sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ by our lives with service and speech. Church growth refers to the expansion of faith communities through worship and hospitality. Living out the Good News in an invitational manner realizes church growth in deepening spirituality, wider service, increasing numbers, and radiant manifestations of the reign of God. As both the gathered and sent people of God, we participate in church growth and evangelism through embodying God’s love.
- 3. Financial Responsibility and Leadership. Congregational Stewardship Development** Continuing education in charitable giving and religious fundraising...can provide ministers with information, insights, and inspiration, empowering them to talk about, educate, resource, and encourage members and the church toward growth in stewardship, joyful generosity, and wholeness of health. **Personal Financial Responsibility** Planning for one's tax responsibilities and practicing healthy financial habits can alleviate stress, contribute to a more viable future, and positively encourage others. It can also protect ministers from falling prey to unethical financial behavior that could undo themselves and their ministry—and damage the church. Less personal financial stress equals more energy for ministry.
- 4. Intercultural Competency.** In an increasingly diverse society, it is essential that ministers develop skills and abilities to navigate among cultures in order to effectively embody the good news of Jesus Christ. Annual Conference recommends “that the denomination widen the relevancy of our witness to those ‘from every nation, people, tribe and tongue’ by adopting Revelation 7:9 as our denominational vision for the remainder of the 21st century.” In order to carry out this vision, ministers will need to seek opportunities to be equipped to offer ministries that can dismantle the walls of separation and further the work of racial justice and reconciliation.
- 5. Ministerial Leadership and Administration.** Ministerial leadership involves many different areas of focus and the skills to fulfill a variety of responsibilities. Ministers need to have the ability and desire to envision the future and develop short and long-range plans to meet it. They need to be able to work with congregational leaders. In the midst of this, they must also manage the routine tasks of administration: communications, record-keeping, and time management. Leading well in this context requires self-differentiation, a willingness to ask for and receive feedback on ideas and performance, and the openness to make beneficial changes without losing sight of personal ethics.
- 6. Pastoral Care.** To use the biblical image, the minister is a shepherd who loves, knows, and is committed to those in their care. The good shepherd knows the unique identity of every sheep in the flock and will risk his or her own life for the sheep. So, pastoral care involves visitation in a variety of settings: homes, hospitals, and nursing care facilities; crisis counseling; celebrating high moments in people’s lives; and weeping with those who weep. It is important to note that the minister should not be the only one providing the care; the minister needs to assist in calling and equipping lay people as caregivers.
- 7. Preaching and Worship.** Preaching and worship planning/leadership are among the most important aspects of a minister’s life. Preaching must be grounded in Scripture and relevant to today’s issues; the preacher must believe and live what he or she proclaims and be passionate about wanting others to receive Christ into their lives. Worship must focus on the awesome presence of God and Christ in the life of the gathered community. The worship planner and leader need to be very sensitive to the needs of individuals and the “unchurched” community, seeking always to find new ways of proclaiming the good news.
- 8. Spiritual and Personal Formation.** Ministerial leadership that is resilient and truly grounded in God is dependent upon a dedicated and regular practice of the spiritual disciplines. In order to distinguish God’s voice from the myriad of others that permeate life, ministerial leaders must immerse themselves in daily practices of prayer, study and attentiveness to God...There is no substitute for this regular attentiveness to God’s movement for those who are called to consider and enter the work that God has laid before them. Therefore, it must be our work, as well, to remain healthy and vigorous for the duration of our service in ministry.
- 9. Theology.** Theology concerns our language about God and how we express those ideas. Theology may take several forms, including historical theology, systematic theology, contextual theology, and biblical theology. The process of constructing affirmations about God and the relationships between God and humanity and between God and creation have a long, rich history in the Christian tradition. Ministers regularly engage in the theological enterprise and use theological categories; in various aspects of the practice of ministry, ministers draw on language, beliefs, and commitments about God using such theological approaches.
- 10. Special Ministry Areas.** Individuals are increasingly called to serve in specialized ministries. These include, but are not limited to, children’s ministry, youth ministry, young adult ministry, singles ministry, older adult ministry, small group ministry, visitation ministry, counseling ministry, leadership of non-profit organizations, and Christian education ministry. Those who serve in specialized ministry areas may include studies related to their specific ministry description in this focus.
- 11. Personal Enrichment.** Professional growth may lead to opportunities for education and personal enrichment in areas not directly related to ministry. Options are unlimited. Ministers are strongly encouraged to consult with the district prior to pursuing an educational opportunity that may count toward necessary CEUs. Possibilities include health care, arts, athletics, mechanical endeavors, ecology, etc.