**Northwestern Illinois District 2024 Exploring the Call to Ministry**

ECM is an opportunity for an individual, and spouse if applicable, to understand the

commitment, requirements and qualifications for ordination in the Church of the Nazarene at the beginning of the journey. The sensing of a call from God to possible vocational ordained ministry comes at a great personal/family sacrifice and the district board of ministry wants to help those answering that call to understand the journey they are contemplating taking.

While the individual is the one who has been called, we require the spouse to experience ECM in order to understand their mate’s pursuit and the lifestyle that will impact the entire family. Without the spouse’s endorsement and understanding, the applicant would be ill-advised to move forward until they are in agreement.

This event is designed to help both the candidate and spouse to connect with and understand clearly from district leadership their recommendations for moving forward in ministry. ECM is a required step in the progress toward ordination.

**Who should attend?**

Required:

1. Any person applying for a first-time district license must attend before a license will be considered.
2. Any district licensed minister who transfers to the NWIL district will be required to attend the next available ECM Experience.
3. Any district licensed ministers who received their first license prior to 2020 must attend prior to ordination.

Optional:

Individuals who sense the call to ministry and have the blessing of the pastor/church board to attend ECM and would like to explore more deeply God’s call on their life. (This is dependent on space availability.) Note: Attending ECM only carries a 3-year validation with ECM Team approval. If a participant takes longer than that to apply for district licensing, it would be necessary to complete ECM again.)

Other important information

* Both candidate and spouse must attend the entire experience. Due to the condensed nature of the event, all sessions must be attended in their entirety. If any session is missed for any reason, the entire experience must be retaken.
* If a person who has completed ECM marries prior to their ordination, they will be required to attend ECM again with their new spouse. Fiancé(e)s are encouraged to attend. (Note: There will be an increased cost if not commuting due to extra hotel room.)
* If you have registered and are applying for first time district license and have a divorce in your or your spouse’s background, you must contact the district secretary, Rev. Karin Orwig, immediately at districtsecretary@nwilnaz.org for additional steps you will need to take.
* The home church must sponsor the individual by paying half of the cost by the time of the event. The individual must equally invest in the cost by paying the remaining half at the time of registration. Neither party is allowed to pay the entire cost without DS and BOM Chair approval. This will help ensure the candidate is ready to take this exploration step.

**Costs to attend: (to be split equally between church and candidate)**

**Cost for 2024 ECM: (Includes meals and materials)**

$350.00/married; $300/single; $350/engaged couple

Hotel, if needed: $100/room

Potential additional cost: Assessments (TBA)

**The ECM Timeline and Experience:**

1. August 1st - September 1st: Online registration. Registration closes at midnight. *No late applications will be accepted.* The link can be found on the District Website:

<http://www.nwilnaz.org/exploring-the-call-to-ministry-experience/>

2. After Registration occurs:

* The reading and writing assignments, along with the District License application, will be available to download off of Realm through your registration form.
* The applicant has until September 30th to complete all assignments.

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3. September 30th: All applicants’ assessments and assignments must be completed and submitted. Late submissions will not be accepted. The pre-course work the candidate does will carry a lot of weight in helping the ECM members to know where that candidate is on their ministerial journey.

4. October 1st-12th: BOM will process, inspect and validate all submitted material, contact lead pastors for confirmation of candidates, send payment notifications to churches, set up review teams, assign reading and review assignments, submit documents to team members for study and preparation for ECM.

5. October 9th-12th: BOM will set final schedule, process renewing district licensed ministers and prep for ordination candidates and interviews.

6. October 13th, 1:30pm –October 14th, 3:30 pm: Exploring The Call To Ministry Experience

**Responsibilities for Lead Pastor and Applicant:**

**Lead Pastor:**

1. Appropriately notify potential applicants of the ECM requirement asap.
2. Seek church board approval for covering applicable costs.
3. Lead Pastors will be contacted by the district when a person applies to ECM for more information about the applicant’s call to ministry and current serving capacity.
4. Provide church board approval for district licensing before ECM event *if applicable*.
5. Attend the Friday evening session in support of your candidate. Dinner begins at 5pm and the evening should be over by 9pm.

**Applicant:**

1. Should seek pastor/church board approval prior to registration.
2. Register online between August 1st-September 1st.
3. Download necessary assignments and documents on the registration site.
4. Submit all necessary reading and written assignments, complete inventories and application, and submit prior to September 30th.

**Outcomes from attending the event:**

If applying for a district license the applicant will know if they will be recommended for

licensing to the assembly. ECM will take the place of BOM interview for first time license or renewing of license if applicable.