



Reading Program for Ordination

2020 Edition

To Be Used by Regional Leadership Teams

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Introduction to Reading Program 2012 – 2020 Editions

This edition builds upon the hard work of many individuals. Several years ago the National Ordination Council recognized the need for a set of documents that would clearly define, standardize, and implement the guidelines of the National Association of Brethren Church Elders and the several districts (now regions) to provide for a national ordination examination process.

The members of the National Ordination Council developed the original “Sequence of Events Leading to Licensure and Ordination,” and the accompanying written exam, oral exam, forms, and readings. NOC members later developed the original tracking form and the checklist. The NOC later refined the reading program to a series of units with accompanying forms, to provide necessary tracking of the process. The many members of the Council who over the years developed, edited, and updated these documents have made this edition possible, and their contribution is gratefully acknowledged.

In order to distribute these documents as efficiently as possible, it was decided to have them edited for content, abbreviated whenever possible, and translated into electronic formats that could be easily transmitted and distributed. In many cases the original editions were lost, and it was only through the efforts of pastors throughout the denomination that a complete set of documents in adequate condition to be translated electronically became available.

It is with deep appreciation for the work done by so many, and in the hope that these documents will continue to assist those who seek to serve in ministry for the Kingdom of God in The Brethren Church that this edition is presented.

The 2012 Edition is the first with the reading Program appearing as a separate document.

The 2013 Edition added several works.

The 2014 Edition adds several contemporary works, and additional guidelines on where to find the materials.

The 2018 Edition is updated to reflect the changes caused by regionalization, with oversight for this document now under the National Board of Oversight (NBO).

The 2020 Edition provides alternatives for unit completion for those who due to disability or language may be unable to complete the traditional reading and writing requirements.

Dr. G. Emery Hurd, editor

Digital Submission Guidelines

- **All documents will be submitted in either Word compatibility mode (.doc, .xls, .ppt, .pps) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) or adobe (.pdf)**
- **All documents will have the following naming rules:**
 - **Last Name, dash (-), then First Name of Candidate**
 - **Title of Document**
 - **Four digit year**
 - **Dash (-) then two digit month**
 - **OPTIONAL – Dash (-) then two digit day**
 - **EX: Smith-Edward Form A 2009-05-12.doc**
 - **Date is NOT NEEDED if document is not a report, although the date format above is still recommended.**
- **It is difficult to send by email large documents to some servers. It is therefore advisable to send multiple small files instead of a single large one.**
- **All audio will be sent in either MP3, WAV, or WMF formats or on a CD.**
- **All Video will be sent in either AVI, MPEG, or WMV formats or on a DVD.**

BRETHREN READING PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Those applicants that have not received a degree in the area of pastoral ministry (MDIV, MA Pastoral Studies, MA Practical Theology, or other similar degrees approved by the appropriate regional leadership team), The following additional material must be submitted. For any unit texts and other media may be added by the appropriate regional oversight team.

The Brethren Reading Program is provided as an alternative pathway for individuals to complete the necessary training to prepare for ordination in the Brethren Church. These guidelines are designed to give guidance to candidates, regions, supervising elders, and mentor coaches as they supervise candidates going through the reading program.

With most units there are items that are required study, which can be found in the current edition of the Reading List in the Manual of Commissioning, Licensing and Ordination Procedures, which follows. These texts or courses will include an asterisk (*) before the title. Others may be assigned by the Regional Leadership Team (RLT). This will include any written assignment and specific instructions not limited to the following: outlining a book; writing an article of special interest; writing an appropriate service or sermon. The length of each document written by the candidate will be determined by the Regional Leadership Team. **It is expected that the non-degree candidate will have read and responded to several works in each unit indicated.**

1. Scope and Structure

The reading program may be completed in either a three-year or a five-year program. The three-year program is designed for candidates that can commit significant time and energy to the study. In the three-year cycle, each unit is completed in ten weeks, with five units completed per year. This program only allows two breaks, one in December and one in the summer for one week each. While scheduling and unit order is flexible, this cycle demands high levels of discipline and accountability by the candidate and the mentor. In the five-year cycle, the same fifteen units are covered, but only three each year, with each unit taking thirteen weeks. This pace is best suited for candidates that are in active full-time ministry, since it gives significant time off between each unit, and allows a slightly slower pace for each unit covered.

No specific order of units is suggested to allow each candidate the flexibility necessary to complete the program while in active ministry. Each candidate and region should be intentional in developing a unit completion schedule **in advance**.

A. THREE YEAR CYCLE

Year One

Unit 1 (10 weeks): _____

Unit 2 (10 weeks): _____

Unit 3 (10 weeks): _____

One week break

Unit 4 (10 weeks): _____

Unit 5 (10 weeks): _____
One week break

Year Two

Unit 6 (10 weeks): _____
Unit 7 (10 weeks): _____
Unit 8 (10 weeks): _____
One week break
Unit 9 (10 weeks): _____
Unit 10 (10 weeks): _____
One week break

Year Three

Unit 11 (10 weeks): _____
Unit 12 (10 weeks): _____
Unit 13 (10 weeks): _____
One week break
Unit 14 (10 weeks): _____
Unit 15 (10 weeks): _____

B. FIVE YEAR CYCLE

Year One

Unit 1 (13 weeks): _____
Six week break
Unit 2 (13 weeks): _____
Seven week break
Unit 3 (13 weeks): _____
Six week Break

Year Two

Unit 4(13 weeks): _____
Six week break
Unit 5 (13 weeks): _____
Seven week break
Unit 6 (13 weeks): _____
Six week Break

Year Three

Unit 7 (13 weeks): _____
Six week break
Unit 8 (13 weeks): _____
Seven week break
Unit 9 (13 weeks): _____

Six week Break

Year Four

Unit 10 (13 weeks): _____

Six week break

Unit 11 (13 weeks): _____

Seven week break

Unit 12 (13 weeks): _____

Six week Break

Year Five

Unit 13 (13 weeks): _____

Six week break

Unit 14 (13 weeks): _____

Seven week break

Unit 15 (13 weeks): _____

2. Unit Administration, Accountability, and Setting

Each unit will require the following:

- A reflection/interaction paper of 3-5 pages written for each document/book studied, or a record of significant interaction/discussion with the Supervising Elder or their designee of the contents of the studied item.
- A minimum of 3 books read and reviewed in each unit. See below for alternative fulfillment
- A written summary by the candidate of the discussions with the mentor/coach for each unit.
- Completion of all required readings in units where they are indicated
- A record of the hours spent on each unit.
 - Contact hours: Hours in a group training setting or with a coach/mentor
 - Unit hours: Hours spent reading, studying, or writing.
 - Minimum of 20 Total hours per unit

These requirements for each unit can be fulfilled in any of the following settings:

- An intensive course offering at the seminary or its equivalent
- A group class setting with an instructor over a series of meetings
- An individually supervised study with the required contact hours by phone or other means
- Attendance at a conference/seminar in the unit area provided that said activity is approved by the Regional Leadership Team IN ADVANCE and all other requirements of hours spent and written materials are met.
- Comprehensive Interviews with the candidate by the Supervising Elder or their designee to the extent that they and the Regional Leadership Team are satisfied of the competency of the candidate in that module.

It is the responsibility of the assigned supervising elder or their designee to certify the completion of each unit, and the Regional leadership Team to oversee the integrity of the process.

Brethren Reading Program Unit Completion Form

The candidate and the appropriate regional team should maintain a copy of this form.

A separate form should be completed for each unit.

Attach to this form all written materials completed by the candidate for this unit.

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL MATERIALS DIGITALLY IF POSSIBLE

Region Responsible for Oversight: _____

Name of Candidate: _____

Street: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

E-Mail: _____

Unit Completed: _____

Date Started: _____ Date Completed: _____

Total Hours Spent: _____ How many of these were contact hours? _____

List Books/Materials Read **AND** Written About for Unit, **OR** Intensive Attended **OR** Date and Title of Seminar(s) or Conference(s) Attended **OR** intentional conversations held to determine completion in Completion of Unit on a separate document.

I do hereby certify that the information above and items attached are accurate and represent adequate completion of this unit of study:

Signature of Candidate: _____

Signature of Supervising Elder _____

Signature of Designee, if assigned for this unit: _____

3. The units (Required Readings Indicated by an “*”)

The books listed below can usually be found at online sites, such as Amazon.com or ChristianBook.com. The Brethren works may also be available at our national office in Ashland, Ohio, from the Brethren Heritage Center (BrethrenHeritageCenter.org) which has a new and used online bookstore, or from the Brethren Encyclopedia, Inc. (BrethrenEncyclopedia.org). You may also wish to ask elders in your area if these can be borrowed from their personal libraries. They may also be available for loan from local libraries through an inter-library loan.

Regions and churches are encouraged to assist candidates with the purchase of necessary books for the reading program, and candidates are encouraged to request support from their church and region.

➤ BRETHREN DOCTRINE (in addition to intensive)

_____ **Brethren Pastor's Handbook*, J. Allen Miller, et al.

_____ **Manual of Procedure for The Brethren Church (latest revision)*

_____ **Brethren Beliefs*

_____ ** Concept of Membership in the Brethren Church*

_____ **Statement on Ordination of Divorced Persons*

_____ ** Recommendation on the Subject of the Ordination of Women*

_____ **Background and Development of Brethren Doctrines, 1650-1987*, Dr. Dale R. Stoffer

_____ **The Message of Faith*, Jerry Flora

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ BRETHREN HISTORY (In addition to intensive)

_____ **A Brethren Witness for the 21st Century*, Brian Moore

_____ **A Brethren Witness for the 21st Century*, Jason Barnhart and Bill Ludwig, ed

_____ ** The Complete Writings of Alexander Mack*, William Eberly, ed.

ISBN: 0-936693-12-6

-OR-

_____ *European Origins of the Brethren: A Source Book on the Beginnings of the Church of the Brethren in the Early Eighteenth Century*, Donald F. Durnbaugh
ISBN-13: 978-0871782564 (only the writings of Alexander Mack Contained herein)

_____ **The History of The Brethren Church*, Albert T. Ronk

_____ **Fruit of the Vine*, Donald Durnbaugh

_____ *European Origins of the Brethren*, Donald Durnbaugh

_____ *The Brethren in Colonial America*, Donald Durnbaugh

_____ *The Brethren in the New Nation*, Roger Sappington

_____ *The Brethren in Industrial America*, Roger Sappington

_____ *The Brethren Encyclopedia*, Donald Durnbaugh, ed.

_____ *Meet the Brethren*, Donald Durnbaugh, ed.

_____ *Counting the Cost*, William G. Willoughby

_____ *The Old Brethren*, James Lehman

_____ *Even Unto Death*, John Christian Wenger

➤ BRETHREN POLITY (In addition to intensive)

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ PREACHING AND WORSHIP

_____ **Living Waters for Thirsty Souls*, Marvin McMickle;

_____ **Worship Old and New*, Robert Weber

_____ **Biblical Preaching*, Haddon Robinson

_____ *The New Worship*, Barry Liech

_____ *Between Two Worlds*, John R. W. Stott

_____ *Preaching*, Fred Craddock

_____ *Preaching the Gospel from the Gospel*, G. R. Beasley Murray

_____ *Quick and Easy Way to Public Speaking*, Dale Carnegie

_____ *Ministry of Music*, Vic Delamont

_____ *Quest for Better Preaching*, Edward Marquart

_____ *Worship Matters*, Bob Kauflin

_____ *Thinking in Story: Preaching in a Post-literate Age*, Richard A. Jensen
ISBN: 1-55673-573-1

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ PASTORAL COUNSELING AND PASTORAL CARE

_____ **Practical Psychology for Pastors*, Miller and Jackson

_____ *Christian Counseling*, Gary Collins

_____ *Pastoral Counseling*, Wayne Oates

_____ *Psychology of Religion*, Wayne Oates

_____ *Effective Biblical Counseling*, Larry Crabb

_____ *Personality Plus*, Florence Littauer

_____ *Marital Therapy*, Jacobsen and Margolin

_____ *Soul Care*, David Benner

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ SPIRITUAL FORMATION AND DISCIPLESHIP

_____ **Celebration of Discipline*, Richard Foster

- _____ **Prayer*, Richard Foster
- _____ *Renovation of the Heart*, Dallas Willard (I'd like to require this)
- _____ *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus' Essential Teachings on Discipleship*, Dallas Willard
- _____ *Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered*, James C. Wilhoit
- _____ *Disappointment with God*, Philip Yancey
- _____ *The Practice of the Presence of God*, Brother Lawrence
- _____ *The Way of the Heart*, Henri Nouwen
- _____ *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, Henri Nouwen
- _____ *The Wounded Healer*, Henri Nouwen
- _____ *Surrender to Love*, David Benner
- _____ *Building a Discipling Culture*, Mike Breen and Steve Cockram
- _____ *The Cost of Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- _____ *Life Together*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- _____ *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*, Eugene Peterson
- _____ *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, Donald Whitney
- _____ *Too Busy Not to Pray*, Bill Hybels
- _____ *God at War*, Gregory Boyd
- _____ *War on the Saints*, Jessie Penn-Lewis

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ CHURCH LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

- _____ **A Work of the Heart*, Reggie McNeil
- _____ **Church Leadership: Vision, Culture, Team, Integrity* by Lovett Weems and Rosabeth Moss Kanter

- _____ **Natural Church Development*, Christian A Schwartz
ISBN: 1-889638-00-5 [moved up and required]
- _____ **The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, Ken Sande
- _____ *Values- Driven Leadership: Discovering and Developing Your Core Values for Ministry*, Aubrey Malphurs. ISBN: 0-8010-9015-6
- _____ *Leading Congregational Change: A Practical Guide for the Transformational Journey*, Jim Herrington, et al. ISBN: 0-7879-4765-2
- _____ *Church Unique*, Will Mancini
- _____ *Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, Patrick Lencioni
- _____ *Developing the Leader within You*, John Maxwell
- _____ *AND: The Gathered and Scattered Church*, Halter & Smay
- _____ *Be a People Person*, John Maxwell
- _____ *Church 3.0*, Neil Cole
- _____ *Crucial Conversations*, Kerry Patterson, Joseph Grenny, Ron McMillan, et al
- _____ *The Elephant in the Boardroom*, Wesse & Crabtree
- _____ *Big Dreams in Small Places*, Tom Nebel
- _____ *Death By Meeting*, Patrick Lencioni
- _____ *Antagonists in the Church*, Kenneth Haugh
- _____ *Preparing Your Church for the Future*, Carl George
- _____ *Dying for Change*, Leith Anderson
- _____ *The Debt Squeeze*, Ron Blue
- _____ *Taming the Money Monster*, Ron Blue
- _____ *Looking in the Mirror*, Lyle E. Schaller
- _____ *Leadership*, Charles Swindoll
- _____ *Strengthening Your Grip*, Charles Swindoll

- _____ *How to Break Growth Barriers*, Carl George
- _____ *The Open Church*, James Rutz
- _____ *Unleashing Your Potential*, Frank Tillapaugh
- _____ *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Dale Carnegie
- _____ *The Disciple Making Pastor*, Bill Hull
- _____ *Proclaim Good Tidings*, Vernard Eller
- _____ *Message and Mission*, Eugene Nida
- _____ *The Purpose Driven Church*, Rick Warren
ISBN: 0-310-20106-3
- _____ *From Followers to Leaders*, Bob Logan
- _____ *Full Disclosure*, Stephen Gray
- _____ *Taking Your Church to the Next Level*, Gary McIntosh
- _____ *The Unity Factor*, Larry Osborne
- _____ *Healing the Heart of Your Church*, Kenneth Quick
- _____ *Holy Discontent*, Bill Hybells
- _____ *Legacy Churches*, Stephen Gray
- _____ *Missional Map-Making*, Alan Roxburgh
- _____ *Organic Church*, Neil Cole
- _____ *Planting Fast Growing Churches*, Stephen Gray
- _____ *Silos, Politics and Turf War*, Patrick Lencioni
- _____ *Sticky Church*, Larry Osborne
- _____ *Sticky Teams*, Larry Osborne
- _____ *Implementation Guide to Natural Church development*, Christian A Schwartz and
Christoph Schalk. ISBN: 1-889638-03-X

_____. *Calling and Character: Virtues of the Ordained Life*. Willimon, William

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ THEOLOGY AND CHURCH HISTORY

_____ *Life Together in the Way of Jesus Christ*, Dan R. Stiver

_____ *Theology for the Community of God*, Stanley Grenz

_____ *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology*, Daniel Migliore

*Read (at least) one of the above three titles.

_____ *The Story of Christianity*, Justo Gonzalez

_____ *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, Tim Dowley

*Read (at least) one of the above two titles.

_____ **How to Think Theologically*, Stone and Duke

_____ *Essentials of Christian Theology*, Donald Bloesch

_____ *An Exploration of Christian Theology*, Don Thorsen

_____ *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, Wayne [Walter] Elwell, ed.

_____ *Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*, Stanley Grenz and Cherith Fee Nordling

_____ *The Mosaic of Christian Belief*, Roger Olson [I'd like to require this one, also; it's a history of the development of theology. But I won't insist.]

_____ *A History of Christian Thought*, Justo Gonzalez

_____ *The Naked Anabaptist*, Stuart Murray

_____ *Following in the Footsteps of Christ: The Anabaptist Tradition*, Arnold Snyder

_____ *The Believers' Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism*, Donald Durnbaugh

_____ *Christianity Through the Centuries*, Earl Cairns

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ NEW TESTAMENT

_____ **An Introduction to the New Testament*, David deSilva [moved up and required]

_____ **New Testament Theology*, Frank Matera

_____ *New Testament Introduction*, Donald Guthrie

_____ *A Theology of the New Testament*, George Eldon Ladd

_____ *New Testament Theology*, I. Howard Marshall

_____ *Images of Salvation in the New Testament*, Brenda Colijn

_____ *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels*, N. T. Wright

_____ *Surprised by Hope*, N. T. Wright

_____ *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, Bruce Malina

_____ *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus*, Joachim Jeremias

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ OLD TESTAMENT

_____ *Old Testament Survey*, LaSor, Hubbard, and Bush

_____ *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, Tremper Longman III and Raymond Dillard

_____ *A Theological Introduction to the Old Testament*, Bruce Birch, Walter Brueggemann, Terence Fretheim, and David Petersen

*Read (at least) one of the above three titles.

_____ **God's Design: A Focus on Old Testament Theology* Elmer Martens

_____ *Old Testament Theology: An Introduction*, Walter Brueggemann

_____ *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*, Walter Brueggemann

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ CHILDREN'S MINISTRY AND YOUTH MINISTRY

_____ *On Tablets of Human Hearts*, Mary Ellen Drushal

_____ *Family Based Youth Ministry*, Mark Devries

_____ *Why Nobody Learns Much of Anything at Church and How to Fix It*, Thom & Joani Shultz

_____ *Childhood Education in the Church*, Robert Clark, Joanne Brubaker, Roy Zook

_____ *Sustainable Youth Ministry*, Mark Devries

_____ *Christian Education*, Larry Richards

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ HERMENEUTICS, APOLOGETICS AND ETHICS

_____ **On Guard: Defending Your Faith with Reason and Precision*, William Lane Craig

_____ **Elements of Biblical Exegesis*, Michael Gorman

_____ **The Upside-Down Kingdom*, Donald Kraybill

_____ **How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart

_____ *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, William Klein, Craig Blomberg, and Robert Hubbard, Jr.

_____ *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*, N. T. Wright

_____ *The Last Word: Beyond the Bible Wars to a New Understanding of the Authority of Scripture*, N. T. Wright

_____ *Mere Christianity*, C. S. Lewis

_____ *Handbook of Christian Apologetics*, Peter Kreeft and Ronald Tacelli

- _____ *Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, Josh McDowell
- _____ *Kingdom Ethics*, Glenn Stassen and David Gushee
- _____ *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*, Richard Hays
- _____ *Readings in Christian Ethics*, ~~Clark~~ Robert Rakestraw and David Clark
- _____ *Reviving Evangelical Ethics*, Wyndy Corbin Reuschling
- _____ *Exploring Christian Ethics: Biblical Foundations for Morality*, Kyle Fedler
- _____ *The Peaceable Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics*, Stanley Hauerwas

➤ EVANGELISM AND MISSIONS

- _____ **When Helping Hurts*, Steven Corbett and Brian Fickart
- _____ *Tangible Kingdom*, Smay & Halter
- _____ **The Present Future*, Reggie McNeal
- _____ *Missional Renaissance*, Reggie McNeal
- _____ *Serving With Eyes Wide Open*, David Livermore Baker
- _____ *Out of the Salt Shaker*, Becky Pippert
- _____ *Becoming a Contagious Christian*, Bill Hybels and Mark Mittelberg
- _____ *Just Walk Across the Room*, Bill Hybels
- _____ *Reimagining Evangelism: Inviting Friends on a Spiritual Journey*, Rick Richardson
- _____ *Unbinding the Gospel: Real Life Evangelism*, Martha Grace Reese
- _____ *Living Proof: Sharing the Gospel Naturally*, Jim Petersen

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ TIME AND PERSONAL MANGEMENT

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ COACHING AND MENTORING

Please list other works read and written about below

ADDITIONAL SUGGESTED READINGS FOR NON-DEGREE APPLICANTS

➤ CHRISTIAN CLASSICS

_____ *Pilgrim's Progress*, Paul Bunyan

_____ *The Divine Comedy*, Dante Alighien

_____ *In His Steps*, Charles Sheldon

_____ *Your God Is Too Small*, J. B. Phillips

_____ *The Confessions of St. Augustine*

_____ *My Utmost for His Highest*, Oswald Chambers

_____ *Knowing God*, J. I. Packer

_____ *The Knowledge of the Holy*, A. W. Tozer

_____ *Basic Christianity*, John R. W. Stott

_____ *The Imitation of Christ*, Thomas à Kempis

_____ *True Christianity*, Johann Arndt

_____ *Pia Desideria* ["Pious Desires"], Philip Jacob Spener

Please list other works read and written about below:

➤ CONTEMPORARY READING