



The next step . . .

If you feel called to Baptist Ministry then:

- Discuss this with your minister or other leaders in your local church
- Develop your existing opportunities for preaching, teaching and leadership
- Visit our Baptist College websites to find out more about training
- Contact NWBA for an informal discussion
- Complete a formal Application



Exploring a call to Baptist Ministry

Initial Guideines for Churches and Candidates

North Western Baptist Association, The Resource Centre, Fleet Street, Wigan WN5 ODS

www.nwba.org.uk

Becoming a Baptist Minister

Every Christian has a ministry that they are called to fulfil, but God calls some women and men to be “set apart” for leadership in the wider church, often but not always on a full-time basis. We test and affirm this through our ministerial accreditation system, a process of recognition and training which leads to eventual enrolment on the BUGB accredited list. Such individuals are recognised as called and equipped to serve beyond their “sending” church and “recognised and regarded” by a number of mainstream denominations and chaplaincy organisations.

How do I apply?

If you believe that God is calling you in this way, you should first talk this through with your present minister or other mature Christians who know you well. We are also happy to arrange an informal meeting to discuss this further.

If you are considering ministry **PLEASE CONTACT US AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE** – we are quite happy to be in conversation with you for several months before a formal application is made. During this time, we can guide you in building up experience in support of your application. To arrange an informal interview please contact Andrew Funnell

Who can apply?

We welcome applications for ministry from anyone who is truly called of God to this task, irrespective of age, gender or ethnic background.

However we would normally expect that suitable candidates:

- **Are baptised believers who have been in membership of a Baptist or Independent Methodist Church for at least two years.**
- **Have the support of their local church, expressed through informal affirmation and encouragement as well as a formal commendation from a church meeting.**
- **Have a clear sense of calling from God**
- **Have some experience of Christian leadership and/or responsibility in the local church e.g. House Group leader, preacher, deacon etc.**

What happens next?

Once a formal application is made, you will be invited to meet with our **Ministerial Recognition Committee**. This is a representative group from our churches, some of whom are already ministers, who have been appointed and trained for this task. They will arrange to visit a service that you are leading and also ask you to participate in a number of interviews and presentations. If the MR team feel able to support your application, you will then be commended to a **Theological College** for further interview.

There are five Baptist Colleges in England and Wales:

Northern Baptist College - Manchester
Regents Park College - Oxford
Spurgeon's College - London
Bristol Baptist College
South Wales Baptist College - Cardiff

While North West candidates often prefer to study at their local college, we will support you in making application to any of these, and normally recommend that you compare at least two. Ministry candidates will often make enquiries to colleges alongside their MR application. Most colleges will be happy to hold an informal interview prior to you being formally commended for ministry training. Northern Baptist College also holds an annual open morning when individuals who are considering ministry can visit to find out more. There will usually be a representative from at least one Baptist Association present, who can talk to you about the Ministerial Recognition process. We seek to provide information about the next college open day through the events section of this web-site, but please contact the college directly if you need further details.

Ministry formation usually takes 3-4 years depending upon the nature of the course you choose and the college which you attend. The model is usually Church-based, being appointed as minister in training in a local church alongside formal study. Training is usually done to degree level, though other qualifications are available. If you already have a suitable theological qualification, it is possible that the training requirement may be reduced to two years.

Our primary concern is to recognise individuals' calling – so even if you do not seem to fit any of the categories above, but believe you are called to Baptist Ministry, please contact us for an informal conversation. More information about the various ministry categories (e.g. pastor, evangelist, youth specialist) can be obtained from the Baptist Union of Great Britain ministry department.