

Procedures for Ordination and Credentialing With the EPC GCEPC/LEPC

We are happy that you are making application for ministerial credentials and ordination.

IMPORTANT: For efficiency and assurance of proper correspondence during the application process please place the following email address in your email address book:
generalconference@lutheranepc.com

1. Complete, and return the Credentials Application including:
 - a. Application
 - b. Ministerial Ethics
 - c. Fitness for Ministry Statement
 - d. Background Check Form (Include copy of drivers license)
 - e. Application Fee
 - f. Pastoral reference and a Lay reference
2. Mail your application with **nonrefundable** fee of \$55.00 (USD) to: **GCEPC, PO Box 5184, West Columbia, SC 29171, USA**. Make check or money order to "GCEPC." For your convenience you may use www.Paypal.com using the email address generalconference@lutheranepc.com. An additional fee of \$5.00 (USD) will apply totaling \$60.00 (USD) to be paid to Paypal.
3. Please complete the enclosed forms as honestly and thoroughly as possible. If you have any questions or concerns please contact the General Conference Office at generalconference@lutheranepc.com. We will answer you as quickly as possible.
4. Once your Credentials Application packet is received a background check will be completed. You will be contacted if any clarification is needed.
5. When all of the information in your application folder is complete, the Executive Board will review it. You will be contacted by a member of the Candidate Selection Committee for a telephone interview.
6. Assuming that everything is in order a recommendation will be sent to the Board of Advisors for consideration and approval determination. An Advisor member may contact you if there are clarifications needed.
7. The General Conference Office will notify you when determination is received.
8. You will be contacted regarding your ordination certificate and church/ministry charter.
9. You will be connected to the worldwide forum for ministers. This forum is used to communicate information to our ministers and for them to maintain contact with one another.
10. Please complete the enclosed Faith Pledge form once approval is received.

God bless you. We look forward to hearing from you.



Ministerial Credentials Application



General Conference of Evangelical Protestant Churches

LUTHERAN EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT CHURCH (LEPC) ®

EVANGELICAL PROTESTANT CHURCH (GCEPC) ®

Please type or print legibly and fill in completely. You may use additional sheets when necessary. The "Church" referred to within this application is the EPC GCEPC/LEPC

Date of Application: _____

1. Full Name _____

2. Address _____

3. City, State, Country, and Zip _____

4. Home Phone _____ Business Phone _____ Cell _____

Email Address _____ Web site URL _____

5. DOB _____ Male _____ Female _____ SS# _____

6. Marital Status _____ (single, married, widowed, separated, divorced*)

*If Divorced please explain the reason and give additional information on additional sheets

7. Spouse Name _____ Names and ages of children in your home _____

9. Where do you attend church? _____

10. Are you a pastor? _____ Are you ordained? _____ If so, by whom and when? _____

Are credentials still valid? _____ Explain _____

11. What is your reason for desiring Ministerial Credentials with this Church? _____

12. On a separate sheet of paper please give a detailed account of your spiritual journey. Please include your salvation and baptism experiences/information as well as any other relevant information regarding your spiritual walk with the Lord Jesus Christ.

13. Please describe what you believe to be your spiritual calling. _____

14. Please describe your Christian work during the past several years. _____

15. How much time do you spend in spiritual/ ministerial work?

16. Do you have a secular job? _____ If so, what? _____

17. Have you ever been convicted of a crime? If yes, explain.

18. Are any charges, claims currently filed against you? _____

19. Are you currently in criminal litigation? _____

20. Do you drink alcoholic beverages? _____

21. Do you believe homosexuality is a sin and therefore will oppose the ordination of homosexuals and same-sex marriages? _____

22. Do you oppose abortion except in extreme and grievous times to save the life of the mother?

23. Please detail your post-secondary education. (Please attach copies of certificates/diplomas)

24. List your college degrees, if any, and any other state or national licenses or certifications or Biblical/theological coursework, workshops, or training that you may have. (Please attach copies) _____

25. Do you FULLY understand that if approved you are accountable to this Church and that credentials may be revoked for conduct unbecoming of a minister of the Gospel of Christ? _____

26. Do you FULLY understand this Church **IS NOT** legally responsible for your actions?

27. Do you FULLY understand if granted membership and ordination that you will be a member and minister of the EPC GCEPC/LEPC _____

28. Do you FULLY understand ANY Church or cell group you plant will be a EPC GCEPC/LEPC ministry and must register with the General Conference Office _____ ?

29. Do you FULLY understand that this Church ordains both men and women to the Gospel Ministry? _____

30. Do you FULLY understand all EPC GCEPC/LEPC Churches are congregational in government? _____

31. Do you FULLY understand that any ministry or Church that you establish is autonomous and must be self supporting? _____

32. Do you FULLY understand that you are accountable for your actions and responsible for the work of the gospel in your ministry or Church in all areas including financial? _____

33. Do you FULLY understand that this Church will not be financially responsible or financially sponsoring of your ministry, your church, or yourself? _____

34. Do you FULLY understand that giving false information in the application for credentials with this Church can be reason for revocation of those credentials if approved? _____

35. Do you FULLY understand that this church does not ordain homosexual persons or bless same gender unions? _____

STATEMENT OF FAITH, CORE BELIEFS AND POSITION STATEMENTS

Ministers of the EPC GCEPC/LEPC must accept and adhere to our Statement of Faith, Core Beliefs and Position Statements. Your signature on this application reflects your acceptance of these provided below. Please do not send an application if you are not in agreement with our Statement of Faith and Core Beliefs.

Statement of Faith

We unashamedly believe in God the Father; Jesus Christ, His Son, as our Lord and Savior; the Holy Spirit as our Comforter and Guide; and, the authority of Holy Scripture in matters of Faith and Practice. We stand firmly for Biblical morality. "Where the Scriptures speak, we speak; where the Scriptures are silent, we are silent." "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

Core Beliefs - We Believe

1. The Holy Scriptures, in the original tongues, are the inspired and inerrant word of God;
2. In one God, eternal and self-existent, Creator and Ruler of the universe, and manifested through the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; (We are Trinitarian).
3. That Jesus Christ is truly divine and truly human having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary;
4. That Jesus Christ died on the cross and shed His blood as a Sacrifice for our sins; He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High;
5. That humankind was created in the image of God, but fell into sin causing separation from God;
6. That salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all; and those who repent and believe on Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life and become the children of God;
7. That the water baptism identifies us with the death and burial of Christ and that we should arise to walk in the newness of life;
8. In the ministry of the Holy Spirit to glorify Christ, to convict, to enable the believer to live a godly life and to empower the Church to carry the gospel into all the world;
9. In the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ for His Church;
10. In the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved and everlasting separation from God of all those who reject Jesus Christ.

Position Statements

Baptism: Water baptism identifies us with the death and burial of Christ and that we should arise to walk in newness of life. (Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 8:26-40) In baptism we are identified with Christ whether by immersion, sprinkling, dunking, or pouring where water is provided for such service. Baptism may be by immersion or pouring or sprinkling if water is not available for immersion.

Ordination: Ordination into Christian service is for men and woman who have experienced salvation through faith in Christ Jesus and who are called by Christ through the Holy Spirit to serve Him in ministry. We believe that God has set aside particular individuals for service and that ordination is man's recognition of what God Himself has already done. Men and women may serve as co laborers with Christ in the harvest fields. Men and women may serve as deacons, overseers, apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, and evangelist as examples of all of these can be found in scripture concerning both male and female. From the beginning authority was given to both male and female. In Christ there is neither male nor female, Gentile or Jew, but all are children and servants of God. All are called as a royal priesthood. All levels of leadership are open to spirit led men and women of God.

Homosexuality: The EPC GCEPC/LEPC follows the Bible in all matters of faith including the issue of homosexuality. We will not knowingly ordain any practicing homosexual to the Christian ministry. Our belief is that this should not be an issue causing division and debate within the Church at large, as Holy Scripture already settles the debate. We believe that according to scripture homosexuality is a sin. I Corin. 6:9-11, Lev. 18:22, Romans 1:21-32. Our Christian faith and our love of Christ calls upon us to love the sinner but hate the sin. This we endeavor to do. Our clergy will continue to minister to all people, following the example of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Marriage: Marriage is the union of a man and a woman. It is a vow made before God that the two (male and female) shall become one. The EPC GCEPC/LEPC does not perform same sex unions or bless same sex couples.

Abortion: Abortion is the willful taking of innocent human life. Human life begins at conception because there is simply no other point that it can begin. Therefore, abortion is not acceptable under any circumstance except in the rare and unusual instance where the life of the mother is at real risk. In this sorrowful and serious time only can an abortion be considered.

Antisemitism: The Jewish people are God's chosen people. Believers should bless them as scripture says that God will bless those who bless Israel and curse those who curse Israel. The EPC GCEPC/LEPC recant and renounce the works and words of Martin Luther concerning the Jewish people. Prayer is offered for the healing of the Jewish people, their peace and their prosperity. Prayer is offered for the peace of Jerusalem. With deep sorrow and regret repentance is offered to the Jewish People for the harm that Martin Luther caused and any contribution to their harm. Forgiveness is requested of the Jewish People for these actions. The Gospel is to the Jew first and then the Gentile. Gentiles (believers in Christ other than Jews) have been grafted into the vine. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile but the Lord's desire is that there be one

new man from the two for Christ broke down the wall of separation with His own body (Ephesians 2:14-15). The EPC GCEPC/LEPC blesses Israel and the Jewish people. Prayers are offered for the Middle East and for the salvation and peace of the Arab world.

Unity of the Body of Christ: At the EPC GCEPC/LEPC, we admonish and encourage "In the essentials unity, in the non-essentials liberty, and in all things charity." We share the essentials with our many Christian sisters and brothers and this is necessary to our faith and belief in Jesus Christ for salvation. Many schisms have come in the Body of Christ because of conflicts and disagreements over "non-essentials." In the non-essentials we offer liberty for where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. In all things we offer charity and blessing. We are here to assist, to labor along side in the work of Our Lord Jesus Christ as we all long for His second coming. The Lord Jesus Himself first announced his salvation to us which we cannot neglect and God added His witness through signs, wonders, and the distribution of the gifts of the Holy Spirit according to his will. (Hebrews 2:1-4) The Lord Jesus is the head of his Church. There are many parts but one Body. Each part of the Body of Christ has been given an assignment from the Lord to fulfill until His coming. We endeavor to complete this work in the spirit of unity and in the bonds of peace.

"I (Paul), therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all." Ephesians 4:1-6

Sexual abuse: Incidents of sexual abuse will be reported to civil authorities. Ministers known to be perpetrators will not be reassigned nor will known perpetrators be allowed to continue in ministry with the EPC GCEPC/LEPC.

By signing below I declare my acceptance and agreement with the Statement of Faith, Core Beliefs and Position Statements of the EPC GCEPC/LEPC.

Written Signature

Printed Signature

Date

MINISTERIAL ETHICS

Please read and sign, if in agreement:

1. I will maintain high ethical and moral values in all my dealings, personally and professionally;
2. I will respect each person's difference in doctrine, style and personality as they follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit;
3. I will always be willing to learn; I will strive to adhere to "In the essentials unity, in the non-essentials liberty, and in all things charity."
4. I will only speak in edifying ways in regards to other ministers, ministries, and the Body of Christ at large.
5. I will strive to treat others as I desire to be treated. I will strive to live the servant shepherd model of leadership of the Lord Jesus Christ remembering that as I do "unto the least of these" I have done unto Him.
6. I will support and promote the EPC GCEPC/LEPC financially and in other ways in which the Lord leads me that this work might flourish and be assisted to fulfill its call.

REFERENCES

Please provide one letter of reference from a Pastor and one from a lay person attesting to your character, calling and fitness for the ministry. You are required to disclose any wrongdoings, past or present, concerning whether or not you have a criminal record or are currently in litigation. We are specifically inquiring about child abuse convictions.

Written Signature

Printed Signature

Date _____

MINISTRY CANDIDATE
FITNESS FOR MINISTRY STATEMENT

Please truthfully answer “yes” with explanation or “no” to the following questions:

Have you been the subject of official disciplinary proceedings that resulted in the suspension or withdrawal of recognition of previous ordination? _____

If “yes” please fully explain on a separate sheet. This does not automatically disqualify you from ordination with this Church.

Have you been the subject of review, proceeding, or civil law suit either successfully prosecuted or settled out of court for any of the following?

Sexual harassment _____ Sexual exploitation _____

Sexual abuse _____ Discrimination _____

Physical abuse _____ Child Abuse _____

Financial misconduct _____ DUI _____

If answering “yes” to any item in this document, please fully explain on separate sheets of paper.

Has your driver’s license been suspended or revoked due to driving while intoxicated or under the influence of controlled substances? _____

Do you know of any facts or circumstances regarding your background that would warrant further review for fitness for ministry? _____

If yes, please fully explain noting dates, nature, and place of incident leading to complaint. Use extra sheets if needed.

Ordination Candidate _____ Date _____

NOTICE OF BACKGROUND CHECK

[IMPORTANT -- PLEASE READ CAREFULLY BEFORE SIGNING BELOW]

Note: Conducting a Social Security Trace does not access the subject's credit history nor affects the subject's credit score or credit rating. Please note that by signing below you are authorizing and instructing an immediate criminal background and driving record reports from a third party (utilizing a Social Security Number trace) as deemed necessary and appropriate. Moreover, you are allowing reports from a third party on an ongoing basis without any additional notice for as long as you are a member.

AUTHORIZATION AND INSTRUCTION

I acknowledge receipt of the NOTICE OF BACKGROUND CHECK and certify that I have read and understand that notice. I hereby authorize and instruct **THE EPC GCEPC/LEPC** to obtain criminal background and/or driving record reports from a third party (utilizing a Social Security Number trace) as deemed necessary and appropriate. This authorization and instruction will take immediate effect when I sign below, and will last throughout the duration of my involvement as a member. Accordingly, you may obtain additional criminal background and/or driving record reports from a third party on an ongoing basis throughout my association with your organization without any further notice or additional warning. To this end, I hereby authorize without reservation any law enforcement agency, administrator, local, state or federal agency, information service bureau and/or the Social Security Administration to furnish any and all background information (including criminal history and/or driving records and not credit history) requested by Backgroundchecks.com, another outside organization acting on your behalf. I agree that a facsimile ("fax") or photographic copy of this Authorization and Instruction shall be as valid as the original.

****Include a Legible Photo Copy of your Driver's License Attached to this document.****

Printed Name	Social Security Number
Signature	Driver's License # & State
Date	Date of Birth

FAITH PLEDGE FORM



Faith Pledge

A Faith Pledge is a commitment to God by faith and by God's conviction based on God's provision. Part of being a good steward, or manager, of God's possessions is giving a portion of what He has entrusted to us as He directs. We are His stewards, His servants. All we have is His. It's not that God needs our money. Rather, giving serves as an external, material testimony that God owns both the material and spiritual things of our lives. It also supports the greatest, most enduring work on earth: the work of the Lord. The EPC GCEPC/LEPC has been provided by God as a blessing to you and your ministry. It is honoring to the Lord and to those with whom you serve that you give to support the ministry around the world as you are able and as God directs.

Faith Promise

Faith promises are commitments to give a certain amount if the Lord provides it. This allows churches and ministries to prepare good, logical budgets for the year. It is understood that if God doesn't provide the funds there is no obligation to give (Hebrews 11:1). Committing to a faith promise is scriptural and acceptable to the Lord. All ministries and churches must have a sense of how much money they should expect in the coming year so they can establish a budget (spending plan) and financial accountability. Faith promises give ministries this ability. Each GCEPC minister, ministry, church is expected to seek the Lord in prayer, hear the Holy Spirit's direction and follow that direction in their faith pledge giving. We do not set the amount. The Holy Spirit sets the amount. However, this form of giving is not a license to do nothing as giving is scriptural and scripture has much to say in regards to it. However large or small each one is to give according to the Spirit's leading as a minister or ministry of the EPC GCEPC/LEPC. God in turn will bless your giving because of your obedience to the Holy Spirit's direction. This is part of our walk with God

Conclusion: Special Requests Offerings

There are times during the year when there may be special request for offerings for benevolence, missions, outreaches etc. These are gifts given out of your abundance. In these cases ministers/ministries need to give and commit to an amount out of their abundance (2 Corinthians 8:14) and not out of emotional appeal or guilt. God doesn't want us to give until we are poor, unless it is to improve our lives spiritually. Faith promises represent a balanced approach to giving that encourages people to commit to giving but at the same time provide financial guidelines for future ministry funding. Please do not use your monthly faith pledge as a special request offering. Please give your faith pledge and if a special request is made pray and ask the Lord what further help he would have you to be in that special request.

Name: _____ Address: _____

Email: _____ Phone: (h) _____ (c) _____

(The above information should be kept current as it will be used for receipts and correspondence.)

I /We pledge to give the amount of \$ _____ monthly quarterly as the Lord provides and as it is believed the Holy Spirit has directed. The General Conference Office will be notified if because of unforeseen circumstances it is not possible to give this faith pledge. The concept of the faith pledge and special requests offerings is understood. Effort will be made to follow through in this pledge as the Lord provides without guilt or compulsion and to support the EPC GCEPC/LEPC in other ways that the Lord shows me/us as His servant(s).

Signature _____ Date: _____

Title _____ Ministry Name _____
