

## **Rationale for Joint Motion of the CBAC Council and the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education**

Due to certain cultural shifts and changes across Canada in recent decades, the Canadian Baptists of Atlantic Canada (CBAC), member churches and Associations are being challenged to respond to and propose changes that will better serve our purposes as a body of Christ-followers.

Some of our Associations are struggling to function and maintain visibility; this can impact the journey toward ordination for candidates who are seeking recognition by the Board of Ministerial Standards and Education (“BMSE” or “the Board”). Access to Association licensing and general licensing information has been affected resulting in delays in the journey to ordination with some candidates exiting the process. Also, there are few younger pastoral leaders ready and willing to lead as we face the reality that a large number of our current pastors will be eligible for retirement in the coming years. These are just two of the areas where we see the impact of the shift and changes.

In 2017, the BMSE decided it was time to review our licensing and accreditation process. The Board considered the process beginning with the call to ministry, licensing at the local church level, and the entire process that concludes with the candidate meeting with the CBAC’s Examining Council for Ordination. A working group was established to carry out a series of interviews and bring back their findings to the BMSE. The group members are: Dr. Peter Reid, Mrs. Wendy DuBois, Dr. Robert Knowles, Dr. Frank Guinta, Dr. Garth Williams, and Mr. Andrew Myers (replacing Ms. Dale Taber). In carrying out this charge, the working group met with and received input from:

- BMSE and CBAC Council
- Past Chairs of the BMSE
- CBAC Youth and Family Working Group
- Association Licensing Committees
- Recent Ordinands
- Professors at Acadia Divinity College
- Sociologists at Crandall University
- Pastors, Camp Directors, Counsellors

In addition to licensing, other issues contributed to a lack of clarity around the Ordination process. One internal change currently being implemented by the BMSE and the CBAC Ministry Department include an annual “Boot Camp” for those involved in the Ordination process (Candidates and Supervisors). Changes will ensure that the process is consistent and fair going forward.

This joint motion that CBAC Council and the BMSE are bringing forward identifies four specific areas that will allow the CBAC to address the shift and current realities while still maintaining a process of Licensing and Ordination focused on accountability, ownership, consistency, and support. Together, the local church and the Association will license those seeking ordination or recognized lay leadership.

The areas that this motion addresses are:

- moving to one license from two licenses;
- license will be valid for two years instead of one;
- clarifying questions around the composition of Examining Council; and
- creating a process for those with no previous CBAC local church membership.

We are confident these proposed changes will help encourage the flow of leaders, particularly younger leaders who are entering the process towards ordination.

Submitted by,

Rev. Dr. Rhonda Britton, CBAC President, CBAC Council Chair

Dr. Robert Knowles, Chair, CBAC Board of Ministerial Standards and Education