

ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT ORDINATION?

The Baptist Union of Victoria (BUV) accredits and ordains women and men who are called to pastoral leadership in and on behalf of Victorian Baptist Church communities. We take seriously the responsibility to form and equip pastoral leaders that are spiritually mature, theologically reflective, and emotionally resilient and who are pastorally and missionally engaged in their communities.

WHY ORDINATION?

“Do I need to be ordained?” This is the most frequently asked question by individuals exploring the potential of entering the ordination formation pathway. Of course not! None of us need to be ordained to serve God with the gifts and skills that we have been given. However, as we say at the beginning of each of our ordination services, “God calls the Church to set apart some people for servant leadership as pastoral leaders” and it is this process of being called and set apart to serve the Church in this unique way that we affirm through ordination.

We asked some of our current ordination candidates why they chose to enter the Ordination Formation Process and to tell us something of their experience.

- “The question ‘why ordination?’ became a case of ‘why not ordination?’ as I came to the point of realising if I sensed God’s call to vocational Christian ministry for the rest of my life, then ordination was a way of saying, ‘I’m all in’ and making the most of the opportunity to be formed and shaped into the best and most effective pastor I can be!”
- “I want to devote my life completely to God in the ministry.”
- “My reason to enter the formation for ordination process was to humble myself in learning and invite the wider body to recognise my calling in pastoral leadership.”
- “Until a trusted pastor discussed it with me, I hadn’t considered ordination before and hadn’t seen the value of it. I felt called to my local church but didn’t see that it could be important for the wider body of Baptists to affirm that calling. I now see that and also feel that as a woman there’s value in having the validation and accreditation.”

Why Ordination?

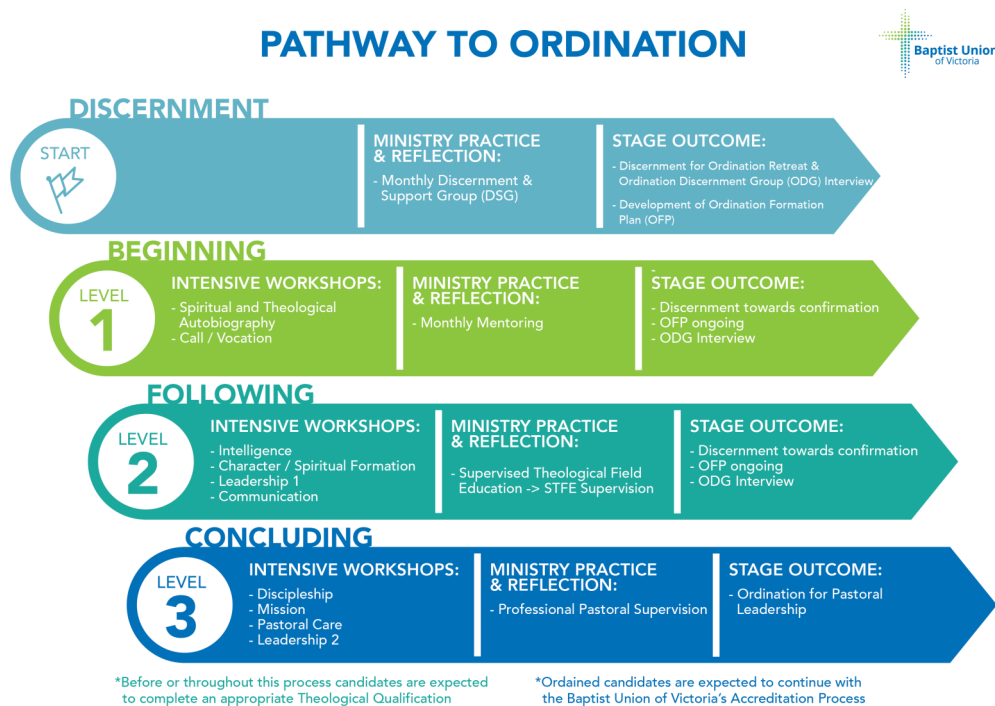
Is it worth the time?

- “I have a greater understanding of my calling and am more equipped to deal with pastoral issues.”
- “I expected there to be more aspects that were superfluous and repetitive given my prior learning and experience but at every point there have been great content from both presenters and other participants that have shaped excellent learning and growth opportunities.”
- “When I first heard about the ordination process from my pastoral team, it felt like a significant burden. However, I decided to participate in the process because I believe it is a system that can build more ethical and healthy pastors.”
- “Even topics I felt rich in, I have seen clear and practical growth. I’m a big believer in lifelong growth and the ordination process has overdelivered! By providing content and the opportunity to hear others’ experience in various topics has led to networks and knowledge growth.”

- “The highlight for me is the fellowship with different colleagues from different backgrounds, sharing challenges and experiences with one another. There have been some great insights!”
- “It has been a fabulous process so far. Both the practical intensives as well as the formal study in theological reflection are working together to help me understand myself and ministry better. I feel better equipped as each month goes on.”
- “The level of connection formed with other pastors has been extraordinary. I feel a sense of belonging, friendship and support. We are all so unique yet we get to do this ministry thing together. The gift of these friendships is the greatest joy and surprise of the ordination process.”

Any highlights of the ordination process?

THE ORDINATION PATHWAY: An Overview



The Ordination Formation Process is based around an ongoing process of discernment between a candidate, the local church and the wider body of the BUV. That discernment continues throughout the program of intensives, formal study, and accompaniment (supervision/mentoring).

Every candidate enters the program with a unique blend of prior experience, qualifications, and training in ministry. For candidates who meet the approved criteria of experience and qualifications, there is an opportunity to begin a bit further along the pathway. Regardless of where you begin, we work with each candidate to develop an individual Ordination Formation Plan that reflects your experience and seeks to build further capacity and maturity for longevity in ministry.

The entry point for all candidates into the Ordination program is through the Ordination Discernment Retreat held each Oct/Nov. If you would like to explore the potential for entering the Ordination Formation Program, contact Rev Beth Jackson, the BUV Head of Ordination on ordination@buv.com.au to set up an initial conversation. We look forward to exploring God's call to pastoral leadership alongside you.