

Ministry Credentials through the UMJC

Are you preparing for Messianic Jewish ministry? Are you already fully involved through your local synagogue? One of the vital resources of the UMJC is the Credentials program, which helps to advance men and women in their work in Messiah's kingdom. Whether you are a congregational leader, a zakeyn/elder, a shamash, or a volunteer in the local synagogue, the UMJC Credentials committee can help prepare you to fulfill your calling.

UMJC congregational membership includes recognition of the group's leader, providing credibility and accountability vital to success. Beyond recognition, the UMJC offers two options for credentials, Madrikh and Smikha.

Option #1 Madrikh (Licensure) Program

The Madrikh Program is a post-graduate training and development curriculum designed to increase the number of equipped leaders in Messianic synagogues. It is the first step toward ordination or smikha, and a valuable credential in its own right.

A collaborative effort between the UMJC and its approved graduate schools, Messianic Jewish Theological Institute (MJTI) and Netzer David Yeshiva, the program provides a core curriculum of ten courses, four of which can be taken as intensive seminars offered at UMJC conferences and retreats. The other required courses are offered online, so that the entire program can be completed in two years. The first five courses listed below must be taken through a UMJC-approved school. Students may apply for equivalency for the remaining courses taken at other schools.

The two-year six-course online sequence consists of the following classes:

1. Messianic Jewish Theology
2. Tanakh: The Beginnings of Judaism and the Jewish People
3. Apostolic Writings: The Early Messianic Jewish Community
4. Messianic Jewish Spirituality
5. Jewish Practices in a Messianic Context
6. History of Judaism and the Jewish People (may also be offered as an onsite class)

The two-year, four-seminar sequence consists of the following classes:

1. The Personal Life of the Spiritual Leader
2. Congregational Growth and Development
3. Basics of Synagogue Worship
4. Effective Public Speaking/Homiletics

The program also involves a one-year mentoring relationship with a UMJC rabbi, or other approved UMJC leader, and a reading plan that will take the students through the entire Bible twice during the two years and lead to an oral exam. Because a Madrikh/Madrikha is a guide in Jewish life and Scripture, he or she will be required to demonstrate a basic knowledge of Hebrew. The end result is licensure in the UMJC as a Madrikh or Madrikha, a position recognized in our synagogues as valuable for leaders on their way to smikha, as well as for teachers, synagogue officers, cantors, counselors, and other positions of support and leadership.

Applications are available at www.umjc.org. Completed applications should be sent to Madrikh Program Coordinator Barney Kasdan. To be eligible for admission to the Madrikh program, students must possess an undergraduate degree and participate in a UMJC congregation.

Option #2: UMJC Smikha (Ordination)

The second credentialing option is Smikha or Ordination. This is the next step beyond the Madrikh Program, especially for those called to full-time Messianic rabbinic ministry. All of the Madrikh courses apply toward Smikha, and additional graduate coursework is required as well. Courses are offered through both of our approved graduate schools (MJTI or Netzer David Yeshiva), and coursework from other graduate schools may be submitted for equivalency evaluation, except for the five Madrikh classes under A. below.

I. Ten Academic Courses

** Denotes a course required for Madrikh certification.*

A. Taken through a UMJC recognized graduate school (these are the same five online courses listed above under the Madrikh program)

1. Messianic Jewish Theology *
2. Tanakh: The Beginnings of Judaism and the Jewish People *
3. Apostolic Writings: The Early Messianic Jewish Community *
4. Messianic Jewish Spirituality *
5. Jewish Practices in a Messianic Context *

B. Taken at any graduate school

6. Biblical Hermeneutics
7. Introduction to Rabbinic Literature
8. Talmud
9. Jewish-Christian Relations

C. Taken at any college (or the equivalent)

10. The History of Judaism and the Jewish People*

II. Eight Professional Development Units

Taken at a UMJC-approved school, mentored by a UMJC rabbi, or certified by a UMJC rabbi.

1. The Personal Life of the Spiritual Leader*
2. Congregational Growth and Development*
3. The Basics of Synagogue Worship*
4. Effective Public Speaking/Homiletics*
5. The Roles of the Messianic Jewish Rabbi
6. Shabbat and Weekday Worship Services
7. Services for the High Holy Days and Moedim
8. Key Events in the Jewish Life Cycle

III. Internship

Under the direction of a UMJC rabbi, covering:

- The Rabbi's Personal and Professional Relationships
- Pastoral Care I – Counseling and Prayer
- Pastoral Care II – Serving Through the Stages of Life

Yeshua said “The harvest is rich, but the workers are few.” The UMJC Credentials options provide a great way to step forward in Messiah’s service.

We encourage you to contact the UMJC Credentials chairman, Rabbi Barney Kasdan, at bkasdan@kehilatariel.org for more details!