District Committee on Ordained Ministry Handbook
Thanks to the connectional nature of the United Methodist Church, we express our gratitude to the West Ohio Annual Conference for the initial draft of this handbook. It is used here by permission and adapted for use in the Iowa Annual Conference.

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Purpose of this Handbook

Greetings! Thank you for serving on one of our Iowa Conference District Committees on Ordained Ministry (dCOM)! This is an awesome and holy responsibility, to journey alongside persons as they seek to discover, clarify, and live out their call from God in ministry. Your work will shape the church, and thus, the world, for generations to come. As we help these persons move through the process of responding to God’s call, we are accountable to God, to The United Methodist Church, to the Iowa Annual Conference, to local churches, to the candidates and to each other. We are so grateful for your willingness to share your gifts with God through the work of your dCOM!

This handbook is intended to accomplish three goals:

1. **First,** we want to make your valuable work as easy as possible. When you gather to conduct an interview, you can flip to the right page in this handbook and have everything you need before you to do a thorough and careful interview.

2. **Second,** the Board of Ordained Ministry wants to ensure that all candidates are examined justly and consistently. Using a common set of questions for all candidates, local pastors, provisional elders and provisional deacons will ensure that all will get a thorough and consistent experience across the conference. Our faith demands that we treat all people fairly. Common questions will help us to prevent favoritism or from easing the process for some candidates.

3. **Third,** we want to make sure that our interviews rigorously examine all candidates and local pastors in the areas of Wesleyan theology, practice of ministry (leadership and fruit), their articulation of calling and how they lead a disciplined life as a follower. The Effectiveness in Ministry definition (included on page 7 of this handbook) helps define with more clarity what this means. The pillars of this definition are Faith, Fire and Fruit. Faith is exhibited in conviction and character; Fire is exhibited in calling, passion and vision; Fruit is evidenced in competency for ministry and achieved results of ministry.

All of the work of this committee carries a high level of confidentiality, from the files to our committee discussions. As a matter of trust, it is essential that you observe the covenant of not discussing the work of this committee with anyone outside of the committee, nor share the files with others.

This is an exciting journey to share together. Please be in prayer for the dCOM, our candidates, our district and conference staff, and for yourself. Pray that with our help, God will raise up outstanding leadership for our churches in this time.

We value your input. If you have changes you would like to suggest, please email them directly to the Director of Ministerial Services, Lisa Steel, at lisa.larson@iaumc.org.
Called Anew Task Force

Intro/Charge

This document represents our best effort to define the role of the Iowa Conference in determining effectiveness in response to this call of God—and when necessary, helping colleagues transition to a new season of life in ways that are fair and just.

From the beginning of the Methodist movement, John Wesley believed that we could experience God’s sanctifying grace through “Christian Conferencing.” That together, we should both support and encourage one another as we move on to being perfected in love. But Wesley also believed that we should hold each other accountable for continuing to progress along the way. The experience of sanctifying grace is a perpetual journey on which we need companions who will help us to continue to grow in love and who will speak truth to us when we take a detour or get stuck in one place.

This companionship consists of a discipline and a relationship in which persons engage in order to increase in ministry competence and to grow into the likeness of Christ. It assumes that growth in faithfulness and competence does not happen automatically or accidentally but requires intentional and regular reflection on our actions in light of the gospel. In this companionship we create a gracious space for identifying the gifts that the Spirit has given us and the best ministry for using those gifts. It can assist persons in moving from simply wanting to live out a call to acting in ways that bear fruit for the kingdom.
Definition of Effectiveness in Ministry - Please keep this in mind for all stages of ministry

An effective clergy leader in the Iowa Conference possesses and exhibits the following leadership qualities and vocational competencies. These qualities and competencies will yield fruitful ministry and congregations.

Faith is exhibited in conviction and character.

- **Maturing Spirituality**: Demonstrates and models an intentional and disciplined spiritual life.
- **Integrity and Authenticity**: Demonstrates consistent behavior that is in alignment with Christian beliefs, practices, and healthy relationship with God.
- **Sound Theology**: Understands, knows, and celebrates the power of Jesus Christ to bring healing and wholeness, forgiveness and reconciliation, justice and peace, to the lives of individuals, congregations, and communities.
- **Servant Leadership**: Exhibits servant leadership that cultivates the gifts of the Spirit and empowers others to claim their call and find their place in ministry.
- **Relational**: Exhibits the ability to listen, develop working teams, equip persons for ministry, and manage conflict in a way that leads to healthy resolution.
- **Self Care**: Maintains a healthy balance between self, family, and work and participates in covenant community through a clergy cluster.
- **Connectional**: Serves as a leader who knows and supports United Methodist theology and polity as defined in *The Book of Discipline*, gives clear support for connectionalism and obedience to his/her ordination vows.
- **Adaptability**: Demonstrates the ability to be flexible regarding geographical location, congregational constituency, and worship styles.
- **Performance Standards**: Exhibits a strong and healthy work ethic and consistently produces quality results.
- **Ministry Development**: Demonstrates a willingness to lead the congregation or organization in establishing ministries of nurture, outreach, and witness as appropriate to the setting.
- **Pastoral Care**: Ensures that care, appropriate to the ministry setting, is provided for all people. Intentional systems are developed to equip others to provide Christian care and adhere to visitation priorities that are appropriate to each setting.
Fire is exhibited in calling, passion and vision

- **Proclamation**: Possesses and articulates a working knowledge of biblical faith; demonstrates the ability to communicate and apply the gospel of Jesus Christ in culturally relevant ways to the diverse population groups of our conference.

- **Commitment to Inclusivity**: Models and embraces inclusiveness, demonstrating sensitivity to diversity.

- **Visioning and Implementation Skills**: Demonstrates the ability to partner with laity in identifying and articulating vision and the ability to lead the vision toward reality.

- **Inspirational and Motivational Skills**: Relates to others in a way that inspires and encourages their faith journey and their ministry and witness to the world.

- **Administration**: Demonstrates administrative, management, and supervisory skills.

Fruits evidenced in competency for ministry and achieved results of ministry

- **Evangelism and Discipleship**: Demonstrates the ability to lead the congregation in making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

- **Conflict Management**: Demonstrates superior interpersonal skills through the ability to handle complaints, settle disputes, and resolve conflicts.

- **Passionate Worship**: For those serving in local congregations, fruitful worship (average worship attendance)

- **Radical Hospitality**: Disciples make new disciples (number of baptisms and profession of faith and extends the witness of the Gospel into the community)

- **Intentional Faith Formation**: Disciples engage in growing as a disciple (For those serving in local churches, fruitfulness in the number of small groups, Sunday school classes and Bible studies. For those serving beyond the local church, faith formation will be measured by metrics appropriate to that context.)

- **Risk Taking Mission and Service**: Disciples engage in mission (For those serving in a local church setting, this will be measured by the number of people from the congregation engaged in local, national and international mission/outreach activities and social justice/advocacy engagement. For those serving beyond the local church, risk taking mission and service will be measured by a metric appropriate to that context.)

- **Strategic Priorities**: Adherence, advocacy and progress toward the Strategic Priorities adopted by the Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

- **Extravagant Generosity**: Disciples give to mission (For those in local church settings, this will be measured by the total amount given by local church to other organizations for support of benevolent and charitable ministries including apportionments paid. For those serving beyond the local church, extravagant generosity will be measured through the application of social justice principles upon the organization’s budget and mission.)

Adapted from: Characteristics of Effective Clergy from the Virginia and North Georgia Conferences. (May 2013 Version)
The District Committee on Ordained Ministry

Adapted from The Book of Discipline 2016 ¶666

Amenability

The district committee on ordained ministry (dCOM) shall be amenable to the annual conference through the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM). All actions are recommendations to the Board of Ordained Ministry and shall be reported to the Board by the district committee registrar.

Responsibilities

The district committee on ordained ministry is responsible for the following actions:

1. Committee shall maintain a list of all persons who have declared their candidacy for ordained ministry and are pursuing candidacy studies

2. Introductory interviews of candidates must be completed for the purpose of discernment. An individual cannot be certified at the candidate’s first dCOM interview.

3. Recommendation for certification as a candidate for licensed or ordained ministry and annual renewal of certification

4. Recommendation for licensing for pastoral ministry and annual renewal of licensing

5. Recommendation for Associate Membership prior to interviews with the Board of Ordained Ministry

6. Recommendation for Provisional Membership prior to interviews with the Board of Ordained Ministry

7. Recommendation for Readmission to Conference Membership prior to interview with the Board of Ordained Ministry

8. Recommendation for certification as a Certified Lay Minister and renewal of certification must be completed every two years.

In addition, the district committee on ordained ministry shall aid the local church in the process of enlisting persons for ordained ministry as deacon or elder or for service as a licensed local pastor or certified lay minister.

The district committee shall also maintain a list of all candidates under its care as well as maintain individual files for every candidate.

The dCOM shall elect its officers at the first meeting following the annual conference session when the members are elected.

Advocate to get individuals involved in group candidacy program. Advocate to make sure that candidates receive a mentor in a timely manner.
Membership

- At least six clergy in full connection appointed on the district, including elders and deacons, and where possible women and ethnic clergy, a deacon or elder who is age 35 or younger, an associate member, and may include one local pastor who has completed the Course of Study
- A representative of the Board of Ordained Ministry
- The district superintendent
- At least three professing members (laity)
- All members shall be nominated by the district superintendent and approved by the annual conference.
- Interim vacancies are filled by the district superintendent.
- All named to the district committee shall be members with vote.
- All members shall be nominated annually by the district superintendent in consultation with the chairperson or executive committee of the BOOM and approved by the Annual Conference.
dCOM Leadership Job Descriptions

District Superintendent

- Receives letter from candidate as outlined in the Candidate Step-by-Step Guide (page 15). Copy also goes to dCOM chair & dCOM registrar.

- Interviews candidate to assess readiness to enter candidacy.
  - If ready, the Director of Ministerial Services is notified. An introductory dCOM interview should be scheduled in consultation with the dCOM chair.
  - If there are reservations for any reason, the candidate interviews with the dCOM.
    - Sends DS Discernment tool to dCOM Chair and dCOM Registrar.

- Assists the dCOM chair in scheduling candidate for an Introductory Interview.

- At the appropriate time, assigns a candidacy mentor, registers the individual in UMCARES, lets them know about the $75 registration fee, and gives approval for Charge Conference and vote.

- Nominates district Committee on Ordained Ministry members and leaders.

- Attends dCOM meetings.

- If there are any physical files for candidates, coordinates the transfer of files of candidates and local pastors moving into the district.

Chair

- Sets the meeting dates, locations, agendas and presides at these meetings.

- Following the district superintendent’s receipt of a letter from a potential candidate and the DS’s interview to assess candidacy readiness, schedules an Introductory Interview with the dCOM.

- Schedules Certification Interviews with candidates who have submitted all required documents. These interviews should be scheduled in a timely fashion. All documents are due one month prior to the interview. The certification interview must be at least the second interview with the dCOM.

- Writes/delegates/approves of written letters to each candidate regarding the results of the interview and recommended action with a copy uploaded to the candidate’s electronic file within a week.

- Provides oversight for all dCOM leaders.

- Ensures that the dCOM interviews candidates at the appropriate time with the correct documents present.

- Assists in training members of the dCOM.
Registrar
- Tracks all candidates.
- Maintains the online electronic file and in some cases, the paper document file, for each candidate.
- Reviews candidate files prior to interview to verify that all documents have been uploaded in the electronic file and the file is complete prior to a candidate’s interview.
- Sends minutes of dCOM meetings to the Conference Registrar.

Secretary
- Sends meeting notices, if delegated by the chair.
- Records and sends minutes of the meetings to the dCOM members and the district office in a timely manner. Includes vote totals/action taken for all candidates.
- Keeps a file of all dCOM minutes (in the district office).

Director of Ministerial Services/Conference Registrar
- The conference coordinator will oversee the candidate’s entry into the online systems.
- The conference coordinator will keep the district superintendent and dCOM informed, as necessary, as to the progress of each candidate.
- Oversees the uploading of: theological papers, and other pertinent information into the electronic file.
Quick Start Guide for Interviews

Here are simple instructions and reminders for each type of interview you may conduct in response to a candidate’s request. Please read the general instructions and guidelines found on page 51 before conducting any interviews.

- Are you interviewing someone who has not yet begun the process & is considering candidacy? (Introductory Interview, page 55 & page 77).
  - Does this person articulate a God call?

- Are you interviewing someone requesting certification? (Certification Interview, page 59 & page 79)
  Note: sometimes, certification and license request are the same interview with two separate votes.
  - Does this person demonstrate a fitness for ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone who is requesting a license as a local pastor? (License Interview, page 60 & page 81)
  - Does this person demonstrate faith, fire, and fruit for pastoral ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone who has already been certified and is requesting a renewal of their certified candidacy? (Candidacy Renewal Interview, page 61 & page 85)
  - Does this person demonstrate an increasing fitness for ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone who is requesting a license renewal? (License Renewal Interview, page 62 & page 87)
  - Does this person demonstrate increasing faith, fire, and fruit for pastoral ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone who is requesting Associate Membership? (Associate Interview, page 64 & page 89)
  - Does this person demonstrate effectiveness in ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone requesting provisional membership as an elder or deacon? (Provisional Elder, page 64 & page 90) (Provisional Deacon, page 65 & page 93)
  - Does this person demonstrate a readiness for ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone requesting to become a Certified Lay Minister? (CLM, page 54 & page 75)
  - Does this person demonstrate a readiness to lead a team or serve in a specific area of ministry within a church congregation or in the Iowa Conference?
Confidentiality

The definition of confidentiality as stated on pages 13-14 of *Fulfilling God's Call: Guidelines for Candidacy* is affirmed as the Iowa Conference’s official understanding of the confidentiality between mentor and candidate with the following additions:

1. An agreement of confidentiality provided by the Office of Ministry will be signed by both candidate and mentor.

2. Any summary of the mentoring relationship written by the mentor is to be signed by both the candidate and the mentor prior to submission. Should there be any comments or disagreements, the candidate may add comments to the statement.

**At the District Level:**

1. Mentors may attend the certification interview with the candidate and be present as a silent observer but leave with the candidate at the end of the interview.

2. Mentor will not be present during the subsequent discussion nor will they participate in the vote.

**At the Conference Level:**

1. Mentors will not be on the interview team of their candidate.

2. Mentors will not be present during the plenary discussion nor will they participate in the vote.

File Confidentiality Agreement

- The ministry files of candidates for ministry that are downloaded for interview preparation are confidential and will be maintained in a confidential manner.

- The ministry files will not be retained after the interviews. dCOM members agree to delete the files from their hard drive and e-mail.

- The ministry files and the details of which, members agree to view personally and not display or share with anyone else.
Proposed Process for Sharing Files for the Purpose of Examination
IAC Board of Ordained Ministry and IAC District Committees on Ordained Ministry
Approved March 6, 2018

References from the 2016 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church
Paragraph 635.1.g - “The board shall select from its own membership an official representative to serve as a member of each district committee on ordained ministry, which shall function as subcommittees of the board.”

Paragraph 635.2.m (Duties of the BoOM) - “To ensure confidentiality in relation to the interview and reporting process. The personal data and private information provided through the examinations of and by the Board of Ordained Ministry will not be available for distribution and publication. There are occasions when the Board of Ordained Ministry would not report privileged information, which in the judgment of the board, if revealed in the executive session of clergy members in full connection with the annual conference, would be an undue invasion of privacy without adding measurably to the conference’s information about the person’s qualifications for ordained ministry. However, it is the right of the executive session of the clergy members in full connection with an annual conference to receive all pertinent information, confidential or otherwise, related to the qualifications and/or character of any candidate or clergy member of the conference.”

Proposed Process:

1. All dCOM teams will be required to sign a Confidentiality Covenant each conference year before files will be sent. The dCOM Chair, Registrar, and Psychological Reader must sign the covenant prior to receiving files electronically. Other dCOM members must sign as they are available. The Registrar is to keep the original copy of the signed covenant, and send updates to the Director of Ministerial Services as other members sign it.

2. When a candidate is returned to the dCOM for oversight and credentialing after examination by the BoOM, the following electronic files shall be sent to the receiving dCOM Registrar and Chair. Each file will be labeled “Confidential” and will be date-stamped for one year so that the dCOM Registrar and Chair will know when the file is to be deleted:
   - Letter sent to the candidate by BoOM
   - Completed summary form from each of the four Focus areas
   - Completed overall summary form
   - DS recommendation
   - BoOM Examination Team Leader and contact information. The dCOM is encouraged to contact the Examinations Team Leader if clarification is needed or there are any questions regarding the BoOM’s examination or decision.

3. Hard copies may be made for use by the dCOM on the day of dCOM examination interviews, and are to be gathered by the dCOM Registrar at the end of the interviews. The Registrar will be responsible for making sure no copies, electronic or paper, are kept by team members.

4. Additional electronic files may be requested from the Director of Ministerial Services by the dCOM Chair or Registrar. They will carry the same “Confidential” marking and one year expiration date stamp.

5. The person identified by the dCOM Chair as the psychological reader may receive psychological test results directly and is required to return them as soon as interviews are done.

6. The dCOM Chair or Registrar may request files be sent again, if needed, after the original one year date has expired. Any re-sent files will have an expiration date of one year after they are sent, and must be deleted and/or destroyed by that date.
Confidentiality Covenant

The purpose of this covenant is to establish confidentiality of all records and files for individual candidates who come before the IAC BoOM and/or dCOM for credentialing. The dCOMs are subcommittees of BoOM and therefore shall have access to records that they need to effectively examine and interview those who seek to be credentialed for ministry.

It is an honor and a privilege to serve on an examination team at both the District and Conference levels.

We are all in process in our spiritual journeys, and we covenant to view any candidate before us as a child of God who is on that same journey.

Therefore, we also covenant to keep confidential all records, files, and conversations regarding all candidates, and will honor the end-use dates for electronic and paper files shared through the Director of Ministerial Services. We acknowledge that if we breach this covenant, we may be removed from serving on district and/or conference examination teams.

District: ___________________________  dCOM Chair: ___________________________

dCOM Registrar: ______________________  Psych Reader: _______________________

dCOM Team:

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**Iowa Candidacy Process Candidate Step-by-Step Guide**

**Step 1: Inquiring Phase**

- Contact the pastor of your local church or campus ministry, another elder or deacon, or the DS; read and discuss *The Christian as Minister*.
- With your pastor, or designated elder/deacon, put into writing a first draft of your Statement of Call. Submit this call story to the District Superintendent, and request an introductory meeting with the DS for the purpose of admission to the candidacy process. Copy Lisa Steel, Director of Ministerial Services, at lisa.larson@iaumc.org
- Introductory meeting with SPPRC or equivalent encouraged to discuss initial sense of call.
- Charge conference approval is required to schedule an interview with the DCOM. Consult with your pastor about a time for the charge conference to meet. If you are recommended by a vote of the charge conference, a report of this action will be made to the dCOM. Charge conference can be held before or after the Candidacy Summit retreat.
- Apply to Candidacy Summit Retreat via Lisa Steel, Director of Ministerial Services
  - Retreats are held two times per year: in early January and in early August. Applications are due by 6 weeks prior to each retreat. Application to include your sense of call/statement of call.
  - Application to Candidacy Summit Retreat will register applicant in UMCARES.
  - Mentor assigned at the conclusion of the Candidacy Summit

**Step 2: Attend Candidacy Summit Retreat**

- You must be a professing member in good standing of The United Methodist Church or a baptized participant of a recognized United Methodist campus ministry or other United Methodist ministry setting for a minimum of one (1) year.
- At the retreat, participants will complete the following:
  - Meet their candidacy mentor and mentor group
  - Complete required forms including: disclosure form, form for background check, credit check and sex offender registry checks, and request for the psychological assessment
  - Interview at least 3 clergy from a variety of ministry settings
  - Formalize their Statement of Call
  - the first four chapters of “Answering The Call” (completed with mentor in your candidacy group)
  - At the close of the retreat, all completed paperwork will be collected and dispersed to DCOM registrars. Candidates are responsible for keeping copies of all paperwork submitted during the candidacy process.
- After the retreat, schedule and complete the Psychological Assessment with the DMPCC.

**Step 3: Declaring Candidacy**

- You must be a high school graduate or have a certificate of equivalency.
- Meet with candidacy group 3 more times, completing “Answering the Call”. Discuss responses to Par. 310 (Book of Discipline)
- Consult with your pastor about a time to be interviewed by the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPPRC), or equivalent. The SPPRC will examine you on your call statement and Wesley’s historic questions (¶310). If the committee approves you, they will make a recommendation to the charge conference.
- Introductory meeting with dCOM (may happen prior to attending Candidacy Summit Retreat)

**Step 4: Certification**

- Prepare responses as required in ¶310.2a-e in the 2016 Book of Discipline. Send these written materials to your dCOM chair at least two weeks prior to your examination interview for certification.
- Sign a written statement prepared with the candidacy mentor for the dCOM. Be examined by the dCOM (¶310.2). The dCOM may approve you, approve you with requirements and/or recommendations, or not approve you.
• Psychological assessment report to dCOM reader, criminal background and credit check completed.
• Agree to make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian Life.
• If you are approved by the dCOM as a certified candidate, your candidacy mentor will complete form 113 (dCOM approval Report for Certified Candidate for Ordained Ministry) on UMCA RES. This step must be completed for your certification to be official with the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry. (See section 3 of the Candidacy Guidebook for more details.) At this point you are ready to: Decide to complete your candidacy and pursue licensing school to become a licensed local pastor with the option of eventually becoming an Associate Member or commissioning and Provisional Membership of the annual conference, leading to becoming a Deacon in full connection or an Elder in full connection (see ¶¶ 324-336).

Step 5a: Completing Candidacy ¶ 324
• Certified candidate for minimum of one (1) year, maximum twelve (12).
• One (1) year in service ministry. [does this need definition? full time? equivalent]
• Completion of one half (1/2) of the Basic Graduate Theological Studies to be eligible for commissioning.
• Health Certificate completed by Medical Doctor.
• Written and oral doctrinal examination and written autobiographical statement.
• Interview and recommendation by three-fourths (3/4) vote of dCOM.
• Notarized statement listing any accusations or convictions of a felony, misdemeanor, or any incident of sexual misconduct or child abuse.
• Interview and recommendation by the BOOM. Election to provisional membership by Clergy Session

—OR—

Decide to become a full-time or part-time local pastor and complete the studies required (see ¶¶315 - 319). A local pastor may continue in ministry as a local pastor, pursue Associate Membership (see ¶321), or Probationary Membership and Commissioning (see ¶324.6) leading to Full Membership and Elders Orders.

—OR—

Continue your Candidacy process as a Certified Candidate, until you have discerned the completion of your process.

Step 5b A Continuing Certified Candidate Must: (¶313)
• Continue to work through the Candidacy Guidebook (sections 4 & 5) with the candidacy mentor who must submit a report annually to the dCOM.
• After completion of the Candidacy Guidebook, continue to work with candidacy mentor on any issues or concerns.
• Continue to give evidence of gifts, fruits, and God's grace for the work of ministry.
• Be recommended annually by your charge conference. Candidates who are students serving as local pastors have the option of choosing their home church or the church they are serving for this recommendation.
• Make satisfactory progress in your studies.
• Have a grade report sent to the dCOM Registrar September 1st of each year if you are a seminary student.
• Have your candidacy mentor send a report to the dCOM Registrar prior to your interview for continuance.
• Be examined annually through an interview to seek approval for continuance by the dCOM.

Please remember that candidates are responsible for making sure that all steps and requirements are met. If you have questions about this process, contact your District Registrar, the Conference Registrar of the Board of Ordained Ministry, or your District Superintendent.
Preparation for dCOM Certification Interview

Mentor submits mentoring report to the Office of Ministry and District Registrar

Submit transcript or copy of diploma providing proof of graduation from accredited high school or certificate of equivalence to the Office of Ministry and District Registrar.

Complete physical and submit medical report (Form #103) to the Office of Ministry.

Contact Pastor AND dCOM Chair to schedule a SPPRC meeting at your church (Pastor facilitates)

SPPRC Meeting Date:

Complete the following written requirements for your SPPRC and dCOM interviews:

- Write a statement of call as outlined in the *The Book of Discipline* ¶310.2a (i)-(vi)
- Answer Wesley's historic questions (*The Book of Discipline* ¶310d)
- Provide written agreement to highest ideals of the Christian life (*The Book of Discipline* ¶310.2d)
- E-mail all of the above to the Pastor, SPPRC Chair, dCOM Chair/Registrar and Office of Ministry

SPPRC interview

SPPRC Chair will send report to dCOM Registrar and District Superintendent.

Recommended (Pastor shall contact the DS to request a special session of the Charge Conference and schedule a meeting at your church to request approval.)

Not recommended (Candidate contacts the dCOM Chair.)

Charge Conference

Presiding Elder will send recommendation to District Superintendent and dCOM Registrar. 2/3 vote and written ballot is required.

Recommended (Candidate contacts the dCOM Chair requesting Certification Interview.)

Not recommended (Candidate contacts dCOM Chair.)

Step 6. dCOM Interview

Following interview complete form 113 on UMCARES. 3/4 majority vote and written ballot is required.

Certify (Yes)

Delayed (Not yet; specific focus areas may be assigned.)

Discontinue (Discontinued from the candidacy process.)

After interview, meet with dCOM Chair to discuss next steps.
Iowa Candidacy Process
Candidate’s Organizational Page

This does not need returned to the Office of Ministry. It’s an optional organizational tool.

Iowa Conference Contact Information
Address: 2301 Rittenhouse Street, Des Moines, IA 50321 Website: www iaumc org (*All forms are available on-line.) Phone: 515-974-8939
Email: Lisa Steel, Director of Ministerial Services: lisa.larson@iaumc.org

District Information (fill in):
District

District Superintendent Phone E-mail
dCOM Chair Phone E-mail
dCOM Registrar Phone E-mail

Mentor Information:
Mentor 1 Phone E-mail
Mentor 2 Phone E-mail

Pre Candidacy Financial Obligations
• $12.99 for Christian as Minister Book for Inquiring Phase as of August 2018

Financial Obligations during Candidacy
• $15 for Background/Credit Check, payable to Iowa Annual Conference as of August 2018
• $45 for UMCARES Online Candidacy System (umcares.org) as of July 2018
• 1/3 of your Psychological Assessment, payable Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center. The personal cost is $210 as of August 2018
Licensed and Ordained Ministries Overview

The Book of Discipline 2016

Licensed Ministry

*Local Pastor* (¶315-320)
- Licensed to pastoral ministry to perform the duties of a pastor in a local church setting
- Not required to itinerate
- License and Appointment renewed each year
- Equipped through Course of Study (COS) classes or seminary if on ordination track

*Associate Member* (¶321-322)
- Permanent License to Pastoral Ministry to perform the duties of a pastor in a local church setting
- Itinerant Ministry appointed to serve by the Bishop
- Equipped through Course of Study (COS) classes and minimum of 60 bachelor hours

Ordained Ministry

*Deacon* (¶328-330)
- Local Church or Appointment beyond the Local Church
- Ordained to Word, Service, Compassion and Justice
- Non-Itinerant Clergy who seek their own employment, which may become an appointment with the bishop’s approval
- Equipped through graduate and/or seminary training

*Elder* (¶332-334)
- Pastoral Charge or Extension Ministry
- Ordained to Word, Sacrament, Order and Service
- Itinerant Clergy appointed to serve by the Bishop
- Equipped primarily through seminary training (*although alternative educational routes are possible; see 2.5*)
Tracks for Licensing and Ordination

The Book of Discipline 2016

Local Pastor Track (¶315)

• High School Education (or equivalent)
• Certified candidate for no more than twelve years (once licensed, twelve-year rule does not apply)
• Completion of Local Pastor Licensing School
• Certified by dCOM as a Licensed Local Pastor
• Appointed by Cabinet
• FT LP must complete 4 courses per year in Course of Study (to be completed in 8 years) or be enrolled in a University Senate approved seminary or college or university
• PT LP must complete 2 courses per year in Course of Study (to be completed in 12 years) or be enrolled in University Senate approved seminary or college or university
• Annual renewal of License for Pastoral Ministry done by the dCOM.

Associate Member Track (¶321)

• High School Education
• Must be at least 40 years of age
• Minimum of 60 hours toward Bachelor’s Degree from University Senate approved college or university
• Basic COS (5 year); no more than one-half online or correspondence
• Full-time Local Pastor for minimum of 4 years
• Fully itinerant
• Permanent License as Associate Member

Seminary Track for Elder (¶324.4)

• High School Education
• Bachelor’s Degree from University Senate approved college or university
• M.Div. Degree from University Senate approved seminary
• Certified candidate for at least one year and no more than twelve years (once licensed, twelve year rule does not apply)
• Provisional Membership (2 year minimum full time)
• Full Membership and Ordination as Elder
Local Pastor Track for Elder (¶324.6)

- High School Education
- Must be 40 years of age
- Bachelor’s Degree from University Senate approved college or university
- Basic COS (5 year); no more than one-half online or correspondence
- Advanced COS (32 hours)
- Provisional Membership (2 year minimum full time)
- Full Membership and Ordination as Elder

Seminary Track for Deacon (¶329.3)

- High School Education
- Bachelor’s Degree from University Senate approved college or university
- Master’s Degree from University Senate approved seminary or in the area of specialized ministry
- Basic graduate theological studies (24 semester hours)
- Certified candidate for at least one year and no more than twelve years
- Provisional Membership (2 year minimum full time)
- Full Membership and Ordination as Deacon

Professional Certification Track for Deacon (¶324.5)

- High School Education
- Must be 35 years of age at time of certified candidacy
- Bachelor’s Degree from University Senate approved college or university
- Professional Certification or License in area of specialized ministry with 8 semester hours of graduate academic credit
- Basic graduate theological studies (24 semester hours)
- Certified candidate for at least one year and no more than twelve years
- Provisional Membership (2 year minimum full time)
- Full Membership and Ordination as Deacon
Transfer from Other Methodist Denomination (¶347.2)

• Ordained Clergy transfer for Full or Provisional membership or Local Pastor verified by GBHEM (credentials and education)

• Notarized Statement, Background Check, Psychological Report submitted (Please allow 60 days to receive the report).

• Educational Requirements of the UMC met and verified by GBHEM

• Receive approval from the Personnel Available Review Committee (PARC)

Transfer from Other Denomination (¶347.3)

• Ordained Clergy transfer for Provisional membership or Local Pastor verified by GBHEM

• Notarized Statement, Background Check, Psychological Report (please allow 60 days to receive the report from the Des Moines Pastoral Counseling Center), Medical Report submitted

• UMC Educational requirements met and verified by GBHEM

• Provisional Membership (2 year minimum full time)

• Completion of UM history, doctrine, polity

• Full Membership and Ordination as Elder
Clergy Discernment Tool for Those Considering Vocational Ministry

(To be submitted to the District Superintendent and District Committee on Ordained Ministry Registrar)

Name of Ministry Candidate: ___________________________________________

Name of Church or Ministry Setting: _______________________________________

Date(s) of Pastoral Discussion: ________________________________

***Must be a certified candidate in order to receive scholarships.***

The Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM) of the Iowa Annual Conference has stated: The role of the pastor and the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPPRC) of every congregation is to lead individuals through a discernment process of identifying, clarifying, and understanding his or her calling for ministry, whether in the general ministry of the church, licensed ministry, or ordained ministry. Therefore, the BOOM encourages every congregation to be on the lookout for potential ministers, to preach about being called into ministry, and to have on hand both “The Ministry Inquiry Process” and “Christian as Minister” as resources for those exploring the possibilities and options for ministry. Because this is such a weighty matter, the pastor and the SPPRC must know the individual well enough to recognize his/her potential and fitness for ministry so they can recommend him/her, or not, and, further, to give the person opportunities to try different ministry settings in the local church where their giftedness can be evidenced and refined.

We recognize that all Christians are called by God to be in transformational ministry in the world as they are gifted. Ordination and licensing are particular callings by God recognized by the Church’s conferring of authority in vocational ministry. When a member of your congregation is seeking validation of a perceived calling, the SPPRC is encouraged to spend time in prayer, reading The Book of Discipline, Chapter Two—particularly ¶¶ 301-305, and using this Discernment Tool to help them clarify their ministry calling.

These questions are to be completed in a conversation or series of conversations with the candidate. Please answer all the questions as completely as you can. A signed copy must be submitted to the District Superintendent’s office and District Committee on Ordained Ministry Registrar before an appointment can be set with the individual pursuing vocational ministry. You are also encouraged to use this as a springboard for further conversations. Keep in mind, the answers submitted in this tool are your evaluations confidentially shared with the District Superintendent and District Committee on Ordained Ministry Registrar.

Calling

A calling into representative ministry is understood as the initiative of God’s grace to choose certain persons to lead the church. Those in representative ministry may serve as ordained elders or deacons or as licensed pastors or certified lay ministers. Ministry settings may include the local church, chaplaincy, higher education, or other settings. All are committed to share in the ministry of Word, sacrament, order, and service.

Your responsibility as the pastor or deacon to help the individual understand his/her internal sense of calling, specifying how his/her ministry is to be expressed. At the same time, there is to be an external calling—a confirmation by the Church that clarifies whether they are being called to representative ministry, or not. Can this person clearly profess his/her faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and acknowledge the Bible as God’s Word?
How did this person recognize God’s prompting them to explore ministry as a vocation?

Can this person be fulfilled through leadership as a lay person?

Explain to this person the requirements and authority of the various expressions of ministry in the United Methodist Church.

**Ordained Ministry as an Elder—¶ 332**

Elders lead God’s people to grow in faith and love, with most serving as pastors in charge of local congregations through Word (preaching and teaching), sacrament, order, and service. They can also serve as chaplains, teaching, or pastoral counseling.

**Ordained Ministry as a Deacon—¶ 328**

Deacons lead God’s people into ministry to the world through Word (teaching and may include preaching), service, compassion, and justice, often in specialized ministry. Some deacons serve in churches in roles such as ministers of Christian education or music. Many serve beyond the local church, in settings such as social service, education, health, or policy advocacy organizations.

**Licensed for Local Pastor—¶ 315**

Local pastors—either part time or full time—are licensed to serve as a congregation’s pastor, with responsibilities for preaching, administering the sacraments, providing pastoral care, and administrative leadership. They do this while pursuing theological education through an approved seminary or in the Course of Study.

**Certified Lay Minister—¶ 268**

The certified lay minister serves as the leader of a small congregation, preaching the Word, providing a care ministry to the congregation, assisting in program leadership, and being a witness in the community for the growth, missional and connectional.

**Lay Servant (formerly Lay Speaker)—¶ 266**

A lay servant is committed to the local congregation, becoming well informed of the scriptures and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of the United Methodist Church. He/she receives specific training to develop skills in witnessing to the Christian faith through spoken communication, church and community leadership, and care-giving ministries. This individual gives leadership, assistance, and support to the mission and ministry of the church.

Other comments:
SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Spiritual maturity refers to more than what an individual knows or does; spiritual maturity is the imitation of Christ evidenced in the character, mindset, and actions of an individual. Leaders in the Church are expected to have grown and continue to grow in the love and knowledge of Christ.

How does this person exhibit spiritual maturity?

What are examples you have witnessed that this person upholds the highest ideals and behavior of a follower of Christ?

How would you describe this individual’s theological depth?

Does this person express any misgivings about the United Methodist Church doctrines and practices?

Other comments:
ATTRIBUTES AND GIFTEDNESS

Ministry is Christ-centered within a community of faith. Therefore, those in ministry must be comfortable in social settings and relational in both public and private occasions.

What social and relational skills have you seen this person exhibit that will be necessary for ministry?

How does this person evidence emotional stability in his/her life?

How does this person demonstrate communication skills (interpersonal and public speaking) necessary for ministry?

Other comments:

EXPERIENCE

Every individual is shaped by past experiences. Take time to reflect on how experiences evidence potential for ministry, as well as equip him/her for ministry.

In what ways has this person shown the ability to articulate his/her faith—to tell his/her faith story?

How has this person effectively led or participated in your ministry setting?

Administration

Pastoral Care
Spiritual Formation

Worship

Describe a ministry this person has initiated.

How has this person experienced stability and success in previous employment?

How will this person’s previous vocational experiences contribute to his/her ministry?

Other comments:

INVESTMENT

Because of the spiritual, emotional, and time stresses, ordained ministry can put a strain on family dynamics—more than most imagine until they have entered into full-time ministry. For Elders and Associate Members, add to this the demands of itinerant ministry, relocating at the direction of the Bishop according to the needs of the mission field.

Have you explained to this person about the lifestyle changes that are inevitable for a clergy person’s family? What was the response?
The bishop asks those about to be ordained a series of historic questions (BOD ¶ 336), including: Are you in debt so as to embarrass you in your work? This question takes on significance in the realization that a seminary education can cost upwards of $100,000. Local pastors and certified lay ministers have less weighty financial obligations. All of this should factor in the discussion.

If this person is considering ordination, how is he/she prepared to meet the financial demands of a seminary education?

Does this person understand he/she can attend only a UMC approved seminary?

If this person is not interested in full-time ministry, is he/she willing to be bi-vocational?

What is this person’s educational background?

Is this person ready for:
- a high school diploma if not completed to be a local pastor dedicating 8-12 years to the completion of the Course of Study (for Local Pastors)?
- a minimum of 60 hours of undergraduate studies (if not completed) to be an Associate Member?
- an undergraduate degree (if not completed) if you want to attend seminary?
- 2-4 years of full-time graduate studies (depending whether Elder or Deacon)
- Has this person considered how many years will be necessary to develop an experience base for effective pastoral ministry (studies show this is typically 7 years of active ministry)?

How many potential years of ministry does this individual foresee after ordination or credentialing?

The ordination process is a significant time commitment for completion of education, residency, and gaining an experience base for effective ministry. Please help him/her consider this obligation in relation to their potential years of ministry (noting that mandatory retirement age is 72, while the average retirement age is 65).
Sample letter from Clergy Person

To whom it may concern:

I am writing on behalf of _________________________ who has completed the Inquiry Phase of the Candidacy Process and wishes to continue in the Candidacy Process.

1. We discussed The Christian as Minister _____________________ (season(s) or month(s) and year).

2. ___________________________ interviewed 3 clergy ___________________________ (season & year).

3. We have discussed the Ministry Inquiry Process ___________________________________________ (season & year).

4. ___________________________ has been a member of the church since ___________________________ (Month & Year).

5. Enclosed, please find an initial draft of ___________________________’s call statement.

By signing below _____________________________ asks to be enrolled in the candidacy studies process and requests a candidacy mentor, the psychological assessment form, the disclosure form, and the background check form.

Clergy signature _____________________________ Date _____________

Candidate Signature _____________________________ Date _____________

Should be sent to District Superintendent, dCOM Chair, dCOM Registrar, & Conference Registrar
District Superintendent Discernment Tool
for Those Considering Vocational Ministry
(To be submitted to the District Committee on Ministry Registrar.)

Name of Ministry Candidate: ______________________________________________________

Name of Church or Ministry Setting: _______________________________________________

Date of DS Discussion: ____________________________________________________________

☐ I have had a private conversation with this individual’s pastor or deacon regarding potential and fitness for ministry.

What was shared that influenced your decision?

CALLING
☐ This person clearly professes his/her faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and acknowledges the Bible as God’s Word.

SPIRITUAL MATURITY
☐ I am confident in the clergy person's assessment of the spiritual maturity of this person.

☐ This person’s theological understanding seems to be consistent with United Methodist theology.

ATTRIBUTES AND GIFTEDNESS
☐ This person seems to exhibit appropriate social, relational, and communication skills.

EXPERIENCE
☐ This person described being a leader within his/her ministry setting.
What new ideas has this person brought to his/her ministry setting?

**INVESTMENT**
- ☐ This person seems prepared for the lifestyle changes that are inevitable for a pastor.
- ☐ This person expresses a willingness to meet the financial demands of a seminary education, if necessary to fulfill his/her calling.

**DECISION**
In your conversation with this person, what insights most influenced your decision?

- ☐ I can envision this person serving as a pastor in my district.

What type of ministry or ministry setting would seem to best suit the individual?

District Superintendent:

__________________________

Printed

__________________________

Signed
### Lay Servant Ministries Overview

*The Book of Discipline 2016 (¶266-271)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Local Church Lay Servant</strong></td>
<td>• Pastor and charge conference approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Complete the Basic Course in LSM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• File annual report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Take a refresher course every 3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serve primarily in the local congregation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Certified Lay Servant**           | • Pastor and charge conference approval           |
|                                    | • Take an advanced course after the Basic Course  |
|                                    | • File annual report                               |
|                                    | • Complete 1 advanced course every 3 years        |
| Local Church Lay Servants who have taken an advanced course in LSM; serve in the local congregation and beyond |                                             |

| **Lay Speaker**                     | (Are Certified Lay Servants)                      |
|                                    | • Pastor and charge conference approval           |
|                                    | • Complete the required courses for lay speaker   |
|                                    | • Interview with Conference Board of Laity        |
| Certified Lay Servants who provide pulpit supply |                                           |
| *Required Courses:*                | • Certified by annual conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries |
| - Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts | • File annual report                               |
| - Leading Prayer                    | • Every 3 years complete 1 advanced course and interview with District Committee on LSM |
| - Preaching, Leading Worship        |                                                 |
| - Living Our United Methodist Beliefs (UM Heritage) |                                     |
| - Life Together in the United Methodist Connection (UM Polity) |                                 |

| **Certified Lay Minister**          | (Certified Lay Servant—recommended)              |
|                                    | • Pastor and charge conference approval           |
|                                    | • DS approval                                     |
| Certified Lay Speaker or Servant who is assigned by the District Superintendent to a particular ministry within the district or annual conference | • Apply to district Committee on Ordained Ministry |
|                                    | • Complete School for Lay Ministry                |
|                                    | • Certified by Director of Connectional Ministries |
|                                    | • Recertify every 2 years                         |
Other Lay Ministry Opportunities

Deaconess (laywomen) / Home Missioner (laymen)

- Commissioned laypersons to life-long, full-time service
- Approved through United Methodist Women
- Commissioned to serve in church-related or helping profession
- Appointed by Bishop

Certification in Specialized Ministry

www.gbhem.org/ministry/certification-specialized-ministry

- For Laypersons and Ordained Clergy
- Certifications Approved by Division of Deacons

Three tracks:

1. Professional (for lay, licensed, or ordained leaders who have an undergraduate degree and take graduate level courses)
2. Undergraduate (for undergraduate students)
3. Paraprofessional (for those who do not have a college degree and are working or volunteering in a specialized ministry)

Twelve areas of specialized ministry:

- Camp/retreat ministry
- Children's ministry
- Christian education
- Collegiate ministry
- Evangelism
- Ministry with the poor
- Ministry with people with disabilities
- Music ministry
- Ministry with older adults
- Spiritual formation
- Urban ministry
- Youth ministry
CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER

DISCIPLINARY PROVISION
In order to enhance the quality of ministry to small membership churches, expand team ministry in churches and in deference to an expression of gifts and evidence of God's grace associated with the lay ministry of early Methodism, the certified lay minister is to be recognized and utilized ¶271, 2016 Book of Discipline.

RESPONSIBILITIES
The certified lay minister shall preach the Word, provide a care ministry to the congregation, assist in program leadership, and be a witness in the community for the growth, missional and connectional thrust of the United Methodist Church as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergy person. (¶271.1)

A Certified Lay Minister (CLM) is vital to the mission and ministry of churches that:
• are small and may be struggling to afford traditional pastoral leadership. CLMs may be assigned effectively for longer periods of time.
• have been on multi-point charges or parishes sharing clergy leadership. CLMs may serve as part of a pastoral team, increasing continuity of leadership.
• experience numeric growth and can benefit from a pastoral team. Larger churches can have a CLM as a ministry associate.
• serve multi-cultural or cross-cultural groups by developing indigenous leadership

QUALIFICATIONS
1. ACADEMIC TRAINING
   The candidate is a graduate of Iowa School of Lay Ministry

2. READINESS AND EFFECTIVENESS
   a. Satisfactorily answered Wesley’s questions and moved by the Holy Spirit ¶310)
   b. Recommended by Pastor, SPPRC, Charge Conference (or Administrative Council) and approved by District Committee on Ordained Ministry.
   c. Passed background and credit checks and psychological testing
   d. Agreed to a covenant in ministry and partnership with a ministry team
   e. Currently in active service in the church and demonstrates an appreciation of United Methodist history, doctrine, polity, worship, and liturgy.

STEPS TO CERTIFICATION
1. Candidate has been a member of The United Methodist Church for one year and is currently in active service.
2. Talk with the Pastor about this call to Certified Lay Ministry. Read together The Christian as Minister.
3. If the pastor is in agreement, the candidate meets with the SPPRC with the Pastor to discuss certified lay ministry and his/her call.
4. If SPPRC agrees, it brings a recommendation to Charge Conference or Administrative Council which makes a decision to support or not to support the call.
5. Recommendation of the District Superintendent (who initiates background and credit checks and psychological testing) (Please have the psychological assessment done 60 days before the report is needed).
6. If recommended by the DS, the candidate applies to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry which reviews and may approve the candidate as qualified. (“Qualified” indicates approval by the dCOM for service; certification is granted when an assignment is made.)
7. Ministry assignment and certification.
MINISTRY ASSIGNMENT
1. Ministry opportunities were discussed while in process.
2. Only approved Certified Lay Ministers may be assigned to a ministry
3. Ministry with a congregation or with the district.
4. Develop written Ministry Covenant
5. Form a Mutual Ministry Team: a group of 3-6 people who will support the CLM and hold her/him accountable. MMT may include the supervising pastor, representatives of the home congregation and/or the ministry setting where assigned (SPPRC, Administrative council, or others).
6. Supervising clergyperson assigned
7. CLMs have no clergy rights or benefits and may or may not be paid

The local church is encouraged to cover appropriate expenses of the CLM as negotiated (mileage, supplies, continuing education) as stated in the Ministry Covenant.

RECERTIFICATION
1. Apply in writing for requalification/recertification every two years to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry; complete the Annual Signature Report form and the Annual Report for Recertification.
2. Ministry Review by Church Council or Charge Conference of the home church
3. Written report of supervising clergyperson
4. Satisfactory completion of an approved Continuing Education event
5. Recommendation of the District Superintendent
6. Interview with District Committee on Ordained Ministry
7. Qualified for recertification upon receipt of a ministry assignment.

ROLE OF THE CONFERENCE BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY AND BOARD OF LAITY
1. Work together to provide consistent criteria for formation and use of certified lay ministers
2. Have a vital supportive role in the training and recognition of CLM
3. Board of the Laity provides training through School of Lay Ministry (SLM)
4. Graduates of SLM may apply to become Certified Lay Ministers
5. Responsible for support not certification
6. May plan recognitions and provide ministry interpretations so that individuals hear and respond faithfully to God’s call to ministry

ROLE OF THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE ON ORDAINED MINISTRY
1. Ensures that the applicant understands Certified Lay Ministry and its distinct relational ministry in the church. The dCOM is a monitoring group to support the formation, training, supervision, and accountability of the CLM.
2. Reviews all recommendations and reports, interviews the candidate, and may qualify the applicant. Also qualifies candidate for recertification.
3. Possible questions during interview:
   • How have you experienced the presence of God in your ministry?
   • How would you describe your understanding of God, Christ, and the work of the Holy Spirit?
   • Do you see your work as a certified lay minister as a calling from God?
   • What gifts, skills, and abilities do you bring to certified lay ministry?
   • Describe the covenant for ministry you have for ministry in your setting. Is this covenant carried out in partnership with a ministry team?
   • What is your role in meeting the sacramental needs of the congregation?
   • What fruits have you seen as a result of your ministry?
   • Where does your ministry need to be strengthened?
   • What are your plans for continuing education to strengthen your effectiveness in ministry?

ROLE OF BISHOP AND CABINET
The Bishop and Cabinet have responsibility for assigning (not appointing) a CLM to a place of service. It is their work with a local congregation to discern appropriate pastoral leadership that makes it possible for a CLM to serve where assigned.
ROLE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH PASTOR
1. Encourage people to do ministry.
2. Talk with candidates about their call to Certified Lay Ministry. Discuss with the candidate The Christian as Minister.
3. The pastor is the first level of the recommending process. He/she explains in writing why he/she recommends the candidate. In recommending, the letter should state that the person is a member in good standing in the local church and highlight their service and abilities which are seen locally as fruit of ministry.

ROLE OF THE SPPRC AND LOCAL CHURCH
1. Once recommended by the pastor, the candidate meets with the SPPRC together with the pastor to discuss CLM and the candidate’s ministry call and the process.
2. SPPRC makes a recommendation to support or not to support the call.
3. If the SPPRC supports the call, the candidate is recommended to the Charge Conference or Administrative Council.
4. If supported by the Charge Conference or Administrative Council, a letter is sent to the District Superintendent (to continue the process).
5. The pastor, SPPRC and Charge Conference or Administrative Council should be able to affirm, if the candidate is supported, that he/she satisfactorily answered Wesley’s Questions: (¶310.1d)
   a. Do they know God as pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?
   b. Have they gifts, as well as evidence of God's grace, for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?
   c. Have they fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their service.

ROLE OF THE DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT
1. Initiates background and credit checks and requires the candidate to take psychological assessment. (Fees may be paid by the candidate and returned by the local church or district if assigned a ministry.) (Please allow 60 days to receive the assessment.
2. Discusses with candidate the check and assessment results and other requirements.
3. Discusses with candidate ministry opportunities
4. When a ministry is decided and assigned, establishes with the Certified Lay Minister a written ministry covenant.
5. Assigns a supervising clergyperson
6. Receives evaluation report from the supervising clergyperson
NAME

CERTIFIED LAY MINISTERS CHECKLIST
(for those who are beginning the process)

PERSONAL
☐ You have acquired a copy of the Certified Lay Minister process and checklist you are convinced that you are being called to Certified Lay Ministry.
☐ You have answered Wesley questions in writing (See ¶310, Book of Discipline 2016)

WITH PASTOR
☐ You have talked with your pastor about your call.
☐ You have read and discussed with your pastor the book The Christian as Minister. You have been recommended by your pastor.

WITH LOCAL CHURCH
☐ You have met with the SPPRC together with the pastor and discussed your call and the process for CLM.
☐ You have been recommended by the SPPRC.
☐ You have been recommended by the Church Council or Church Conference.

ACADEMIC TRAINING
☐ You are a graduate of the Iowa School of Lay Ministry. When? __________________ Where? __________________

WITH DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT
☐ A letter of application sent to the District Superintendent.
☐ A letter of recommendation from the Church Council or Charge Conference and given to the DS You have taken the psychological testing and results are ready for the District Committee on Ordained Ministry. (Please allow 60 days to receive the psychological assessment results.) You have had the background & credit checks completed.
☐ Recommended by the DS to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry

WITH DISTRICT COMMITTEE ON ORDAINED MINISTRY
☐ Biographical Information form completed and submitted
☐ Contacted the Chair of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry about Interview date?
☐ When is your interview? __________________________
☐ Interviewed and qualified __________________________ not qualified __________________________

WITH DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT
☐ Invited by DS to meet to discuss ministry opportunities
☐ Assigned a ministry: ☐ Local congregation ☐ District ☐ Other
☐ Ministry Covenant written and submitted to the DS
☐ With the Church or District- formed a Mutual Ministry Team Assigned a supervising clergyperson
☐ Will begin ministry on __________________________

Approved by the Board of Ordained Ministry on May 21, 2009 Edited by Board Executive Team on January 28, 2011
Edited by Board of Ordained Ministry on May 20, 2011 Edited by Board of Ordained Ministry on January 27, 2012
Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FORM
(To be submitted when first applying for qualification)

Name_______________________________________________ Date ______________

Full Address
___________________________________________________

Phone (_____)_________________ Cell Phone(_____)_________________ Birth date________________________

Sex: Male ☐ Female ☐ E-mail ____________________________________________

Ethnic Origin: Asian ☐ African American/Black ☐ Hispanic ☐ White ☐
Native American ☐ Pacific Islander ☐ Other _______________________________

Local Church Membership.________________________________________

Your Educational Background Dates Attended Degree or Credit Hours

High school ___________________________ ___________________________

College ___________________________ ___________________________

Graduate School ___________________________ ___________________________

Theological Seminary ___________________________ ___________________________

School for Lay Ministry ___________________________ ___________________________

Marital Status: ☐ Single, never married ☐ Married, in first marriage ☐ Married, in second or more
☐ Widowed ☐ Separated ☐ Divorced

If married, spouse’s name ___________________________ Birth date ___________________________

Date of Marriage ___________________________ Spouse’s occupation ___________________________

Your children, if any:
Name of child Date of Birth Sex Education
_________________________________________ ___________________________ ___________________________
_________________________________________ ___________________________ ___________________________
_________________________________________ ___________________________ ___________________________
_________________________________________ ___________________________ ___________________________

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Dependents in addition to your spouse and children:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Education</th>
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Describe your community involvement and volunteer work, such as participation in community organizations, social clubs, service agencies, and other non-church-related volunteer service:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Your childhood family and other significant relatives:

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<tr>
<th>Relation</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
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Your work experience, such as current employment, previous employment, and military experience, if any.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Have you served as a local pastor, diaconal minister, deacon, or elder in The United Methodist Church?

☐ Yes  ☐ No  If Yes, what Conference?

*** Note  *** If additional space is needed, please use a separate sheet of paper and attach to this form.
CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER SIGNATURE REPORT FORM
(to be submitted annually when seeking recertification)

Name __________________________________________ Home Church ___________________________

Address ______________________________________________________________________________

Phone ________________________________ Email _____________________________________________

District ________________________________ Supervising Pastor _____________________________

Assignment/ministry________________________________________________________________________

ANNUAL APPLICATION TO DISTRICT COMMITTEE

I, ___________________________, hereby make application to the dCOM of the ___________________ District
to be recertified as a Certified Lay Minister (CLM) as required by the 2016 Book of Discipline, (¶271), and the
Iowa Annual Conference.

As a certified lay minister in the Iowa Annual Conference, I have completed at least one approved continuing
education event and have attached an appropriate certificate of completion.

SIGNATURE _____________________________________________________ DATE __________________

I, ____________________________, Chairperson of the Church Council of _____________________
UMC where the CLM's membership is held, declare that a satisfactory review has been completed on the CLM
named above as required by the 2016 Book of Discipline, and the Iowa Annual Conference.

SIGNATURE _____________________________________________________ DATE __________________

My Ministry Covenant was reviewed and updated on _____________________________ and a copy is attached.

SIGNATURE _____________________________________________________ DATE __________________

District Committee on Ordained Ministry Interview District: ________________________ Date: ______________

Review and endorsement vote by dCOM: __________________________ endorse ____________ do not endorse

Recertification is granted upon assignment to a ministry by the Superintendent.

Next Scheduled review date: ________________________________________

Original to be kept in District Office
Signed copies to be kept on file with: dCOM, BOOM registrar, CLM
CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER ANNUAL REPORT FOR QUALIFICATION FOR RECERTIFICATION
To the District Committee on Ordained Ministry
IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE of THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Certified Lay Minister: __________________________ Year endorsed: __________________

Full address: __________________________________________________________

Phone: __________________________ Email address: __________________________

Name of Home Charge: __________________________ District: _______________

Assignment/Ministry: ______________________________________________________

Supervising Clergy: __________________________ Date: __________________________

ASSIGNMENT DUTIES
Certified Lay Minister- In order to enhance the quality of ministry to small membership churches, expand team ministry in churches and in deference to an expression of gifts and evidence of God's grace associated with the lay ministry of early Methodism, the certified lay minister is to be recognized and utilized. 1. The certified lay minister shall preach the Word, provide a care ministry to the congregation, assist in program leadership, and be a witness in the community for the growth, mission and connectional thrust of The United Methodist Church as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergy person. (2016 Book of Discipline, ¶ 271)

Are you fulfilling the duties of a CLM? □ Yes □ No
If not, what are the areas of concern?

It is expected that the Mutual Ministry Team will provide regular support and evaluation for the CLM. How is this being accomplished?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS
What spiritual gifts have you identified in yourself?

THE PRACTICE OF MINISTRY
How have you grown in the areas of preaching, caring ministry, program leadership, and witness in the community? (Indicate any of these areas which are not a part of your CLM assignment.)
CONNECTION FOR MINISTRY
How does your understanding of United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity enhance your ministry?

What aspect(s) of United Methodism would you like to know more about?

How do you demonstrate an understanding of and support for our connectional church for those in your congregation?

SACRAMENTS
As lay person, a CLM may not conduct the sacraments of Holy Baptism or Holy Communion. You must contact your supervising pastor or the Superintendent to arrange a service of Baptism or Holy Communion.

Who is conducting Holy Communion services at the charge? How often?

How are arrangements made for Holy Baptism?

If applicable, please outline the procedure that will be used for weddings and funerals on a separate sheet.

ACCOUNTABILITY and EFFECTIVENESS
For purposes of accountability and effectiveness, a CLM must be supervised by an ordained, commissioned, or licensed pastor (supervising clergy). The CLM and supervising clergy must meet regularly. Each must submit an annual report to the dCOM.

Are you meeting on a regular basis with your supervising clergy? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How many meetings this year: __________________ Date of last meeting: ______________

CONTINUING EDUCATION
Each CLM must satisfactorily complete an approved continuing education event each year for recertification. What continuing education event was successfully completed this year? By whom was it approved? How did this event help you in your ministry assignment?

What questions do you have for the District Committee?

I understand that certification is granted only when a ministry assignment is made by the Superintendent.

Signed ____________________________________________ Date ____________

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SUPERINTENDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT for
CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER SERVING UNDER ASSIGNMENT in the
IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE of THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Superintendent: ___________________________ Date of Report: ____________

Certified Lay Minister (CLM): ________________ District: __________________

Name of CLM's Home Charge: __________________________________________

CLM’s Assignment/Ministry: ____________________________________________

ASSIGNMENT DUTIES
Certified Lay Minister-In order to enhance the quality of ministry to small membership churches, expand team ministry in churches and in deference to an expression of gifts and evidence of God's grace associated with the lay ministry of early Methodism, the certified lay minister is to be recognized and utilized. 1. The certified lay minister shall preach the Word, provide a care ministry to the congregation, assist in program leadership, and be a witness in the community for the growth, missional and connectional thrust of The United Methodist Church as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergy person. (2016 Book of Discipline, ¶271)

Are you satisfied that he/she is fulfilling the duties of CLM? ☐ Yes ☐ No If not, what are the areas of concern?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS
What spiritual gifts do you see in the CLM?

THE PRACTICE OF MINISTRY
What growth have you observed in the areas of preaching, caring ministry, program leadership, and witness in the community? (Indicate any of these areas which are not a part of the CLM's assignment.)

CONNECTION FOR MINISTRY
How does the CLM demonstrate an understanding of United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity?

How does the CLM demonstrate an understanding of and support of our connectional church?
SACRAMENTS
The CLM may not conduct the sacraments of Holy Baptism or Holy Communion. He/she may contact the supervising pastor or the Superintendent to arrange a service of Baptism or Holy Communion.

Does the CLM understand this reality? □ Yes □ No

Are you comfortable that the CLM works within the connection in the matter of sacraments?
□ Yes □ No

ACCOUNTABILITY and EFFECTIVENESS
For purposes of accountability and effectiveness, a CLM must be supervised by an ordained, commissioned, or licensed pastor (supervising clergy). A CLM and supervising clergy must meet regularly for supportive and evaluative purposes. Each must submit an annual report to the dCOM.

Who is the supervising pastor? __________________________________________

Is he/she meeting on a regular basis with the CLM? □ Yes □ No

It is expected that the Mutual Ministry Team will provide regular support and evaluation for the CLM. Are you comfortable that this is being carried out? Is it bearing fruit in the CLM's ministry?

ASSIGNMENT
Name the ministry, if any, to which the CLM will be assigned this year:

Has a ministry covenant been written? □ Yes □ No

Additional Comments:

Signed___________________________________________ Date __________________
SUPERVISING CLERGY ANNUAL REPORT for
CERTIFIED LAY MINISTER SERVING UNDER ASSIGNMENT
in the IOWA ANNUAL CONFERENCE of THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Certified Lay Minister (CLM): __________________________________________ District: __________

Supervising Clergy: __________________________________________ Date of Report: ______

Name of CLM’s Home Charge: __________________________________________

CLM’s Assignment/Ministry: __________________________________________

ASSIGNMENT DUTIES

_Certified Lay Minister_- In order to enhance the quality of ministry to small membership churches, expand team ministry in churches and in deference to an expression of gifts and evidence of God’s grace associated with the lay ministry of early Methodism, the certified lay minister is to be recognized and utilized. 1. The certified lay minister shall preach the Word, provide a care ministry to the congregation, assist in program leadership, and be a witness in the community for the growth, missional and connectional thrust of The United Methodist Church as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergy person. (2016 Book of Discipline, ¶271)

Are you satisfied that he/she is fulfilling the duties of a CLM?  □ Yes  □ No

If not, what are the areas of concern?

It is expected that the Mutual Ministry Team will provide regular support and evaluation for the CLM. How is this being accomplished?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

What spiritual gifts do you see in the CLM?

THE PRACTICE OF MINISTRY

What growth have you observed in the areas of preaching, caring ministry, program leadership, and witness in the community? (Indicate any of these areas which are not a part of the CLM’s assignment.)

ORGANIZATION FOR MINISTRY

How does the CLM demonstrate ability to lead in visioning and planning to assess ministry effectiveness, to lead meetings, to handle conflict and criticism, and to address the nature of change and transition?
CONNECTION FOR MINISTRY
How does the CLM demonstrate an understanding of United Methodist history, doctrine, and polity?

How does the CLM demonstrate an understanding of and support of our connectional church?

SACRAMENTS
The CLM shall not conduct the sacraments of Holy Baptism or Holy Communion. He/she may contact the supervising pastor or the Superintendent to arrange a service of Baptism or Holy Communion.

Who is conducting Holy Communion services at the charge? How often?

How are arrangements made for Holy Baptism?

Please outline the procedure used in regards to weddings and funeral/memorial services. Please attach sheet with information about this.

ACCOUNTABILITY and EFFECTIVENESS
For purposes of accountability and effectiveness, a CLM must be supervised by an ordained, commissioned, or licensed pastor (supervising clergy). A CLM and supervising clergy must meet regularly for supportive and evaluative purposes. Each must submit an annual report to the dCOM.

Are you meeting on a regular basis with the CLM? □ Yes □ No

How many meetings this year:__________ Date of last meeting __________

Has the CLM submitted a request for recertification to the dCOM? □ Yes □ No

If you do not know, please ask your CLM. If they have not submitted a request and the annual report, review the report with them before submission

CONTINUING EDUCATION
Each CLM must satisfactorily complete an approved continuing education event each year for recertification. Has the CLM discussed continuing education plans with you? □ Yes □ No

Has the continuing education requirement been met? □ Yes □ No

Additional Comments:

Signed __________________________________________________________ Date __________
A TEMPLATE FOR THE

Ministry Covenant in the Iowa Annual Conference

Certified Lay Minister

Ministry Assignment

Supervising clergy

Describe the work/duties of the ministry assignment. Be specific in stating what duties are assigned and how often each duty is to be completed.

Describe the accountability system(s) which will be in place. Include when the CLM will meet with the supervising clergyperson and what reports are expected. Identify who will serve on the Mutual Ministry Team and when/where they will meet.

Compensation: List the compensation for the ministry assignment, if any. List any allowances for mileage, supplies, continuing education.

Signatures: Provide space for the signature of the certified lay minister, the supervising pastor, and the Superintendent with the date of each.

(Original kept in the district office. Signed copies provided to CLM, supervising pastor, Mutual Ministry Team.)
Local Pastor Licensing School Overview

Anyone wishing to receive a License for Pastoral Ministry must have an episcopal appointment (not a supply pastor assignment), be affirmed as a certified candidate by the dCOM, be affirmed for licensing by the dCOM, and successfully complete Local Pastor Licensing School (LPLS). LPLS is typically held from Sunday-Saturday.

The General Board of Higher Education and Ministry prescribes a basic LPLS curriculum that requires a minimum of 80 hours of contact time. To fulfill this requirement, pre-event assignments are a critical part of LPLS.

LPLS expectations include:

- All participants are required to attend all sessions and be in residence during the allotted time
- All participants will purchase and bring the designated books
- All participants will complete their pre-licensing school assignments and fully participate in all sessions during the week

Topics covered by LPLS include:

- Spiritual Formation
- Worship
- Weddings
- Funerals
- Sacraments
- UM Tradition
- Discipleship Pathways
- Social Media
- Pastoral Care
- Wellness
- Leadership (including vision and strategy)
- Evangelism
- Mission
- Preaching
- Church Administration
- Personal Finances
- Stewardship
dCOM Interview Guidelines

Guidelines for preparing for an interview

- dCOM chair/registrar will make sure the necessary paperwork is turned in for the candidate file.

- If there is any paperwork to be submitted, the candidate should submit it to the dCOM Registrar at least two weeks before the interview.

- dCOM members are expected to set aside time before the day of interviews to adequately read and review the files for the candidates they are interviewing.
  - For initial certification and licensing or recommendations to Board of Ordained Ministry, it is expected the entire file will be reviewed.
  - For renewals pay special attention to interview forms from the past several years and educational updates, and pay attention to goals sheets and any new correspondence.

- Practice good stewardship of paper and ink (print only what you really need.) Please do not print out medical records or psychological reports. These reports are only available to the readers.

Guidelines for preparing for an interview on the day of interview

- dCOM chair will organize interview teams, who will then report back to the full plenary a recommendation for a final vote on the candidate’s request.

- On the day of interviews allow adequate time before interviews for teams to discuss a strategy for the interview. Decide on the most important questions; follow ups from previous interviews and who will ask each question.

- Refer to the proper questions and forms in the dCOM Handbook for the appropriate interview.

- In each interview team, decide who will take notes and make sure each interview has the proper interview form. Choose a time keeper, aiming for 30-50 minutes per interview, depending on purpose of interview.

- In each interview team, decide who will pray at the beginning and at the end of each interview.
Guidelines for interviews

- A designated team member will greet the candidate in the waiting area and accompany them to the interview team room.

- Chair/Team Leader will welcome the candidate, introducing them by: name, ministry and purpose of interview/candidate’s request. Everyone shall wear a nametag.

- Team members will introduce themselves.

- Someone will begin with prayer.

- Ask appropriate questions for the stated purpose of the interview, centering around the interview strategy. Refer to the dCOM Handbook for required and suggested questions for the stated purpose of the interview.

- Toward the end of the interview, ask candidate if they have any questions for the dCOM or are there ways that the dCOM may be helpful to the candidate.

- Interview teams will discern their recommendation to plenary. Candidates will be reminded that the full dCOM has the final vote, not just the interview team, and describe how the final decision of the dCOM will be communicated to the candidate.

- Someone will close with prayer.

- Team members will complete the appropriate interview form, prepare for their plenary report and evaluate their team interactions.

- Please be sure to keep questions appropriate and make sure that they pertain to the interview.

- Also, in order to prepare candidates for their examinations with the Board of Ordained Ministry, incorporate a question from each the topics listed on pages 72-73. These questions are divided into the four categories: Doctrine and Theology, Worship and Preaching, Practice of Ministry and Call and Disciplined Life.
District Committee Voting Percentages

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<th>¾ Majority vote</th>
<th>Simple majority</th>
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<td>Commissioning Recommendation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial Certification</td>
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<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initial License</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renewal of Certification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Renewal of License</td>
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<td>•</td>
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<tr>
<td>COS extension beyond 8 years FT and 12 years PT</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Other matters of candidacy</td>
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**Discipline References:**

**Recommendation from the district to the conference BOM - ¾ majority vote**

The Book of Discipline 2016 ¶324.10 under Provisional Membership— “Each candidate shall have been recommended in writing to the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry, based on a ¾ majority vote of the district committee on ordained ministry.”

**Initial Certification - ¾ majority vote**

The Book of Discipline 2016 ¶310.2.e under Candidacy for Licensed and Ordained Ministry— “Candidates seeking to become certified for licensed or ordained ministry shall: Be voted on by individual ballot by the committee members present. A ¾ majority vote of the committee members present is required for certification.”

The Book of Discipline 2016 ¶666.6 under District Committee on Ordained Ministry— “The vote of the committee on matters of candidacy shall be by individual written ballot of the committee present. A ¾ majority vote is required for certification. All other matters of candidacy shall be by a simple majority vote.”

**Time extension to complete the Course of Study - ¾ majority vote**

The Book of Discipline 2016 ¶319.3 under License for Pastoral Ministry— “A full-time local pastor shall complete the Course of Study curriculum within eight years and a part-time pastor within twelve, unless a family situation or other circumstance precludes the local pastor’s opportunity to meet said requirements. The local pastor may be granted an annual extension beyond the prescribed limit upon a ¾ vote of the district committee on ordained ministry, recommendation by the conference Board of Ordained Ministry, and the vote of the clergy members in full connection.”

**Certification renewal, initial license, license renewal, & other district level candidacy matters - simple majority vote**

The Book of Discipline 2016 ¶666.6 under District Committee on Ordained Ministry— “The vote of the committee on matters of candidacy shall be by individual written ballot of the committee present. A ¾ majority vote is required for certification. All other matters of candidacy shall be by a simple majority vote.”

**Other places in The Book of Discipline which talk about renewal do not list percentages:**

¶313, ¶315.2.d, ¶666.8, ¶666.9

According to Meg Lassiat, Director of Candidacy, Mentoring and Conference Relations for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry, no annual conference has the authority to change or strengthen the percentage of the votes required by The Book of Discipline.
Focus of Interview

- Does this person demonstrate a readiness to lead a team or serve in a specific area of ministry within a church congregation or in the Iowa Conference?

Required Questions

- How did the School for Lay Ministry affirm that your call is to serve as a Certified Lay Minister?
- How has the community of the church affirmed your understanding of call to serve as a Certified Lay Minister?
- Describe the specific area that you are/will be leading or serving within your local church or the Conference.
- How are you leading and equipping your mutual ministry team?
- What are your gifts for ministry? What is an example of fruit that has come from your gifts?
- What is your understanding of grace?
- What are your plans for continued growth?

Suggested Questions

- How is it with your soul?
- What did you learn about yourself and about God in the School for Lay Ministry?
- How have you experienced grace?
- What does your support system look like?
- Who has been influential in your Christian journey and how have they influenced you?
- Who are the marginalized in your community and how are you leading your ministry setting to minister with them?
- What spiritual disciplines do you practice?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- What excites you about ministry? What’s your passion?
- What is your understanding of the Mission of the Church?
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year

Action Required

dCOM Secretary: send minutes in a timely manner to dCOM members, the district office and Director of Ministerial Services, including recommendation for the candidate.

Communicate your decision and any requirements or recommendations by letter with the person interviewed in a timely manner, no more than 7 days.
Introductory Interview (¶310)

Requirements prior to interview

1. A professing member in good standing of the United Methodist Church or a baptized participant of a recognized United Methodist campus ministry or other United Methodist ministry setting for a minimum of one (1) year.

2. Review of The Christian as Minister with a clergyperson

3. Email from candidate to DS and dCOM Chair with request for admission into candidacy process, a half-page statement of call, involvement in ministry setting, name/contact of ministry setting, and completion of The Christian as Minister with email or phone number of minister. Interview three clergy in various settings, listening both for a sense of their call to ministry and particulars about their ministry setting as well as, where your story or sense of call intersects with theirs.

4. Introductory Interview with District Superintendent

Required Questions

- Tell us about your personal journey of faith.
  - Briefly describe an experience that shaped your Christian life.

- Tell us about your call to ministry.
  - At this time what do you feel is the nature of your call? (elder, deacon, licensed local pastor, or certified lay minister)

- Tell us about your leadership experiences in the church.
  - What are the fruit of the ministries in which you are involved?

Suggested Questions

- How is it with your soul?
- What are your spiritual disciplines? How are you growing spiritually?
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically?
- What are your personal gifts and growing edges?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- What does your support system look like?
- What excites you about ministry? What’s your passion?
- What is your understanding of the Mission of the Church?

Action Required

- No vote is required.
- However, if the candidate is not ready for entry into the candidacy process, the committee may decide to deny or delay continuing in the process. The committee may also recommend more involvement in a local church or ministry setting before entrance into the process.

- dCOM Secretary: Send minutes in a timely manner to dCOM members, the district office and the Director of Ministerial Services including any vote totals and actions taken for all candidates.
- dCOM Registrar/Chair: Upload minutes, interview form and follow-up letter into electronic file.
- Communicate your decision and any requirements or recommendations by letter with the person interviewed in a timely manner, no more than 7 days.
(SPPRC) Staff Pastor-Parish Relations Committee or Equivalent Body Interview of Candidate for Ministry

(Facilitated by Appointed Pastor and/or Leader of Ministry Setting)

A. Introduce yourself, or have the pastor/leader introduce you, to the SPPRC.

B. Begin with prayer.

C. Explain that in order for anyone to be licensed or ordained into ministry in the United Methodist Church, they must have a recommendation from their SPPRC and Church/Charge Conference.
   
   1. *The Book of Discipline, 2016 ¶ 310.1d* states that: “The candidate will consult with the pastor or equivalent in a ministry setting specified by the district committee on ordained ministry to request a meeting of the staff pastor-parish relations committee or equivalent body specified by the district committee on ordained ministry to consider the statement of call and to be interviewed in light of Wesley’s historic questions.”

   2. The discernment of the local church about this particular candidate’s gifts and grace for ministry is a vital part of the process in determining the candidate’s fitness for ministry. This is holy work and should be done carefully, thoughtfully and prayerfully.

D. The SPPRC Chair should appoint a person to record the outcome of the meeting, particularly the vote that will be taken. The facilitator should have paper ballots or ask the pastor to supply them.

E. Prior to the interview, the candidate is expected to provide the Pastor, SPPRC Chair, dCOM Chair, dCOM Registrar and the Office of Ministry written statement of call and responses to questions found in *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016 ¶ 310.1d, ¶310.2a (i-vi)*, as well as, a written agreement to the highest ideals of the Christian life in ¶310.2d. (see page 9) *The candidate’s responses should provide the framework for the interview conversation.*

F. Please excuse the candidate, so that the SPPRC or Equivalent Body will have an opportunity to discuss the interview and take a vote. The vote is not to be a rubber stamp, but an honest appraisal of the gifts and grace of the candidate.
   
   1. The vote is to be taken by written ballot. With this vote, you will recommend, or not recommend the candidate to your Charge Conference or Equivalent Body. Please spend a few moments in quiet prayer as you consider your vote.

   2. Once the vote is taken and the ballots are tallied, bring the candidate in and report the results.

   3. Please use Form #102 to report the outcomes of the SPPRC interview. Send Form #102 and the minutes to the District Office and the District Committee on Ordained Ministry Registrar.

G. After the appropriate concluding remarks about the candidate or the process, thank the SPPRC or Equivalent Body, the candidate and the pastor or leader of equivalent body for their time and work.

H. Close the meeting with prayer.
The Book of Discipline ¶310.1d (Wesley’s historic questions)

1. Do they know God as pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?

2. Have they gifts, as well as evidence of God’s grace, for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

3. Have they fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their service?

As long as these marks occur in them, we believe they are called of God to serve. These we receive as sufficient proof that they are moved by the Holy Spirit.

The Book of Discipline ¶310.2a (i-vi)

(i) The most formative experience of their Christian life;

(ii) God’s call to licensed or ordained ministry and the role of the church in their call

(iii) their beliefs as a Christian

(iv) their gifts for ministry

(v) their present understanding of their call to ministry as elder, deacon, or licensed ministry; and

(vi) their support system;

The Book of Discipline ¶310.2d

Agree for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness of the gospel, and in consideration of their influence as clergy, to make a complete dedication of themselves to the highest ideals of the Christian life as set forth in ¶103-105;160-166. To this end they shall agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God.
To: Members of the Charge/Church Conference or Equivalent Body

Thank you for your faithfulness in meeting with this candidate. You have been charged with a very important task, deciding whether this candidate should be recommended to the district committee on ordained ministry as a certified candidate for licensed or ordained ministry. This is a responsibility that should not be taken lightly, and you should feel satisfied that the candidate is truly called to credentialed (licensed or ordained) ministry in the United Methodist Church.

The following is from *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, 2016, ¶310.1d. It reflects the long tradition of examination of those who would be called as ordained persons in the Church, and should be used as a guide for your conversation with the candidate who is now before you:

**The Book of Discipline ¶310.1d (Wesley’s historic questions)**

1. Do they know God as pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?

2. Have they gifts, as well as evidence of God’s grace, for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?

3. Have they fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their service?

As long as these marks occur in them, we believe they are called of God to serve. These we receive as sufficient proof that they are moved by the Holy Spirit.

The following are from *The Book of Discipline ¶310.2a (i-vi)* They should also be incorporated into your dialogue/questions with the candidate.

**The Book of Discipline ¶310.2a (i-vi)**

1. The most formative experience of their Christian life;

2. God’s call to licensed or ordained ministry and the role of the church in their call

3. their beliefs as a Christian

4. their gifts for ministry

5. their present understanding of their call to ministry as elder, deacon, or licensed ministry; and

6. their support system;
Initial Certification Interview (¶310.2)

***Certification may happen no sooner than the second interview.***

Focus of Interview

- Does this person demonstrate a fitness for ministry?

Requirements prior to interview

1. Introductory Interview with District Superintendent and dCOM
2. Completion of the steps in the candidacy process including psychological assessment
3. Submittal of proof of high school graduation or equivalent
4. Medical Report which is helpful for encouraging self-care and practices for wholeness of body, mind, & spirit.
5. Submittal of three sealed reference forms
6. SPPRC approval (SPPRC minutes) and Charge Conference approval (Form 104/minutes) and written requirements as outlined on the Step by Step Guide

Required Questions

If initial license and initial certification in the same interview, review Required Questions on both lists.

- How did the inquiry and candidacy process affirm that your call is to credentialed/ordained ministry? To which credential/order and why?
- How has the community of the church affirmed your understanding of call to credentialed/ordained ministry?
- What are your gifts for ministry? What is an example of fruit that has come from your gifts?
- What is your understanding of grace?
- What are your plans for continued growth?

Suggested Questions

- How is it with your soul?
- What did you learn about yourself and about God?
- How have you experienced grace?
- What does your support system look like?
- Who has been influential in your Christian journey and how have they influenced you?
- Who are the marginalized in your community and how are you leading your ministry setting to minister with them?
- Choose one Disciplinary question for beginning theological articulation page 72.
- What spiritual disciplines do you practice?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- What excites you about ministry? What’s your passion?
- What is your understanding of the mission of the Church?
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- If in seminary, tell us about a class this past year that either challenged or excited you.

Action Required

¾ majority written ballot required for certification Form 113 needs to be completed on UMCARES

dCOM Secretary: Send minutes in a timely manner to dCOM members, the district office and the Office of Ministry, including any vote totals and actions taken for all candidates.

dCOM Registrar/Chair: Upload minutes, interview form and follow-up letter into electronic file

Communicate your decision and any requirements or recommendations by letter with the person interviewed in a timely manner, no more than 7 days.
Initial Licensing Interview (¶315)

Focus of Interview

- Does this person demonstrate a fitness for ministry?

Requirements prior to interview

1. Certification by dCOM (may happen no sooner than the Second Interview)
2. Completion of Local Pastor Licensing School
3. Episcopal Appointment (not a supply pastor, but an appointment by the bishop)

Required Questions

If initial license and initial certification in the same interview, review Required Questions on both lists.

- What is your understanding of the sacraments?
  - Do they know we have two sacraments and what they mean?
  - Do they have a United Methodist understanding of the sacraments?

- What does being a pastor mean to you?

- How are you or how will you lead your ministry setting into the mission of The United Methodist Church?
  - Do they know the mission of the United Methodist Church?
  - Can they integrate the mission of the United Methodist Church into their ministry?

- What are your plans for continued growth?

- Written questions from Iowa dCOM pages 72-73. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

Suggested Questions

- How is it with your soul?
- What does having the title “Pastor” mean to you?
- What does your support system look like?
- Who has shaped/is shaping your understanding of ministry?
- Who are the marginalized in your community and how are you leading your ministry setting to minister with them?
- Choose one Disciplinary question for beginning theological articulation see page 72.

- What spiritual disciplines do you practice?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- What excites you about ministry? What’s your passion?
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- If in seminary, tell us about a class in this past year that either challenged you or excited you

- Action Required

- Simple majority written ballot required for licensing
- Remind new licensed local pastors what authority and restrictions come with license. Direct them to Local Pastor FAQ’s.
- Remind them if not in seminary that they now must begin Course of Study - FT - 4 classes per year, PT - 2 classes per year
- dCOM Secretary: send minutes in a timely manner to dCOM members, the district office and the Office of Ministry, including any vote totals and actions taken for all candidates.
- Communicate your decision and any requirements or recommendations by letter with the person interviewed in a timely manner, no more than 7 days.
Renewal of Certified Candidacy Interview (¶313)

Focus of Interview

- Does this person demonstrate an increasing fitness for ministry?

Requirements prior to interview

1. Annual recommendation of the candidate’s charge conference in file.
2. Official transcript from the school, college, or seminary upon completion of coursework and grade reports yearly showing satisfactory progress needs to be sent to the dCOM registrar by September 1st.

Required Questions

- What are you doing to grow your church or ministry and to reach new people for Christ?
  - Give us an example of its fruit.

- What does following Jesus mean to you and how do you live it out?

- Choose one Disciplinary question for theological articulation see page 72.

- What does your support system look like?

- What are your plans for continued growth?

- Written questions from Iowa dCOM page 72. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

Suggested Questions

- How is it with your soul?

- Tell us about your leadership experiences in the past year and an example of fruit from your ministry.

- What was the most difficult ministry challenge you faced this past year and how did you meet it?
  - What did you learn from it, and how do you feel you have grown from this experience?

- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you?

- What are some of the ways you care for yourself?

- What is your plan for paying off your debt, if applicable? We encourage you to seek out scholarships.

- How has your call been shaped/challenged/affirmed in the past year?

- Describe the last time you were with someone who stretched your thinking on an issue or matter of faith.

- What is your understanding of the sacraments?

- How do you equip laity in your ministry setting? Share some specific examples.

- If in seminary, tell us about a class in the past year that either challenged you or excited you.

Action Required

Simple majority written ballot required for renewal

dCOM Secretary: send minutes in a timely manner to dCOM members, the district office and The Office of Ministry, including any vote totals and actions taken for all candidates.

dCOM Registrar/Chair: upload minutes, interview form and follow-up letter into electronic file

Communicate your decision and any requirements or recommendations by letter with the person interviewed in a timely manner, no more than 7 days.
Renewal of Local Pastor License Interview (¶315)

Focus of Interview

- Does this person demonstrate an increasing fitness for ministry?

Requirements prior to interview

1. Annual recommendation of the candidate’s charge conference in file
2. Official transcript from Course of Study, school, college, or seminary showing satisfactory progress by September 1st.
3. Official transcripts when complete, grade reports in progress.

Required Questions:

- What are you doing to grow your church and to reach new people for Christ?
  - Give us an example of its fruit.
- What was the most difficult challenge you faced as pastor this past year and how did you meet it?
  - What did you learn from it, and how do you feel you have grown from this experience?
- What does baptism mean to the church? How do you understand your role in baptism?
- What does communion mean to the church? How do you understand your role in communion?
- Written questions from Iowa dCOM page 72. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.
- What does your support system look like?
- What are your plans for continued growth?

Suggested Questions

- How is it with your soul?
- What does following Jesus mean to you and how do you live it out?
- Tell us about your leadership experiences in the past year & an example of fruit from your ministry.
- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you? What are some of the ways you care for yourself?
- What is your plan for paying off your debt, if applicable?
- How has your call been shaped/ challenged/ affirmed in the past year?
- Describe the last time you were with someone who stretched your thinking on an issue or matter of faith?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- If in seminary, tell us about a class in the past year that either challenged you or excited you.
- If in Course of Study, what did you find useful in your studies last year? What changes to your practice of ministry can you identify as a result of the Course of Study?
- What aspects of your preaching have improved since you were licensed?
- How do you apply United Methodist theology in your teaching?
- How are you using distinctive Wesleyan emphases and characteristics of The United Methodist Church to lead your church in making disciples of Jesus Christ?
- In what ways has your theology of grace shaped your understanding of the Sacraments?
- In what ways have your spiritual disciplines affected your practice of leadership in ministry?
- How do you equip laity in your church? Share some specific examples.
- What is the single most important thing you need at this point in time to become a better pastor?
- What does your work/life balance look like? (Integration of personal and professional responsibilities?)
Renewal of Local Pastor License Interview ¶315 (Continued)

**Action Required**

Simple majority written ballot required for renewal

* **dCOM Secretary:** send minutes in a timely manner to dCOM members, the district office and the Director of Ministerial Services, including any vote totals and actions taken for all candidates.

* **dCOM Registrar/Chair:** upload minutes, interview form and follow-up letter into electronic file

Communicate your decision and any requirements or recommendations by letter with the person interviewed in a timely manner, no more than 7 days.
Recommendation for Associate Membership

Interview (¶322)

Focus of Interview

- Does this person demonstrate effectiveness in ministry?

Requirements prior to interview

1. Annual renewal of license for pastoral ministry
2. 40 years of age or older
3. Served minimum of four years as a Full-Time Local Pastor (may equate part-time service toward full-time service requirement. See ¶322.2)
4. Completed the five year Course of Study with no more than one-half online or correspondence.
5. Completed a minimum of 60 semester hours toward Bachelor’s Degree from University Senate approved college or university
6. Declared willingness to accept continuing full-time appointment while fully itinerant

Required Questions:

The Board of Ministry will be looking for effectiveness in ministry.

- All of us are called by God into the “priesthood of all believers.” Share about your specific call to associate membership.
- Are you and your family fully itinerant?
- What responsibility comes with Associate Membership to the greater connection of the United Methodist Church?
- What are some examples of fruitfulness in your ministry in the past year?
- What are your goals or vision for your congregation?
- Who are the marginalized in your community and how are you leading your ministry setting to minister with them?
- What are your plans for continued growth?
- Written questions from Iowa dCOM page 72. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

Suggested Questions

- How has the Course of Study shaped your theology?
- Ask 2-4 of the Disciplinary Questions for theological articulation page 72
- Other questions that would integrate their theology with their practice of ministry.
- Other questions that make the connection between their Course of Study education and their practice of ministry.

Action Required

¾ majority written ballot required for recommendation

dCOM Secretary: send minutes in a timely manner to dCOM members, the district office and the Director of Ministerial Services including any vote totals and actions taken for all candidates.

dCOM Registrar/Chair: upload minutes, interview form and follow-up letter into electronic file; if paper file exists, transfer file to the Office of Ministry if the candidate is recommended.

Communicate your decision and any requirements or recommendations by letter with the person interviewed in a timely manner, no more than 7 days.
Recommendation for Provisional Membership Interview (¶324)

Focus of Interview

- Does this person demonstrate effectiveness in ministry?

Requirements prior to interview

1. Certified candidate for at least one year and no more than 12 years or licensed local pastor
2. Demonstrated gifts for ministries of service and leadership to the satisfaction of the dCOM
3. Completed undergraduate degree and appropriate graduate theological studies (see page 21)
4. District superintendent Recommendation Form

Required Questions

The Board of Ordained Ministry will be looking for readiness for ministry, including demonstrated gifts for ministries of service and leadership and theological articulation written and oral.

- All of us are called by God into the “priesthood of all believers.” Share about your specific call to ordained ministry. What is your understanding of the meaning of ordination?
- If on the elder track: Are you and your family fully itinerant?
- If on the deacon track: What does the ministry of a deacon mean to you?
- What does being United Methodist mean to you?
- What leadership have you taken in your ministry setting? Tell about some formative experiences you’ve had while leading that ministry.
- What are some examples of fruitfulness in your ministry in the past year?
- Who are the marginalized in your community and how are you leading your ministry setting to minister with them?
- Written questions from Iowa dCOM page 72. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

Suggested Questions

- How has seminary/Course of Study shaped your theology?
- Other questions that would integrate their theology with their practice of ministry.

Action Required

¾ majority written ballot required for recommendation

dCOM Secretary: send minutes in a timely manner to dCOM members, the district office and the Director of Ministerial Services, including any vote totals and actions taken for all candidates.

dCOM Registrar/Chair: upload minutes, interview form and follow-up letter into electronic file. If paper file exists, transfer file to the Office of Ministry if candidate is recommended
The Book of Discipline Provisional Questions

(¶324.9)

a) Describe your personal experience of God and the understanding of God you derive from biblical, theological, and historical sources.

b) What is your understanding of evil as it exists in the world?

c) What is your understanding of humanity, and the human need for divine grace?

d) How do you interpret the statement Jesus Christ is Lord?

e) What is your conception of the activity of the Holy Spirit in personal faith, in the community of believers, and in responsible living in the world?

f) What is your understanding of the kingdom of God; the Resurrection; eternal life?

g) How do you intend to affirm, teach, and apply Part III of the Discipline (Doctrinal Standards and Our Theological Task) in your work in the ministry to which you have been called?

h) The United Methodist Church holds that the living core of the Christian faith was revealed in Scripture, illumined by tradition, vivified in personal experience, and confirmed by reason. What is your understanding of this theological position of the Church?

i) Describe the nature and mission of the Church. What are its primary tasks today?

j) Discuss your understanding of the primary characteristics of United Methodist polity.

k) How do you perceive yourself, your gifts, your motives, your role, and your commitment as a provisional member and commissioned minister in The United Methodist Church?

l) Describe your understanding of diakonia, the servant ministry of the church, and the servant ministry of the provisional member.

m) What is the meaning of ordination in the context of the general ministry of the Church?

n) Describe your understanding of an inclusive church and ministry.

o) You have agreed as a candidate for the sake of the mission of Jesus Christ in the world and the most effective witness of the gospel, and in consideration of their influence as ministers, to make a complete dedication of yourself to the highest ideals of the Christian life, and to this end agree to exercise responsible self-control by personal habits conducive to bodily health, mental and emotional maturity, integrity in all personal relationships, fidelity in marriage and celibacy in singleness, social responsibility, and growth in grace and the knowledge and love of God. What is your understanding of this agreement?

p) Explain the role and significance of the sacraments in the ministry to which you have been called.
Toward an Effective Interview Process

The Purpose of Interviews in Light of Evaluating for Ministry

• A process to determine the fitness or readiness of individuals for ordained ministry.

• At best, a collaborative process in which candidate and committee join together to discern person’s call and gifts.

• At worst, a power abuse used to screen and gate-keep and not form and support.

Definitions

• Evaluation—to determine fitness, readiness and effectiveness.

• Formation—the shaping and integration of ministerial leadership identity.

• Interviewing—the process where by the interviewee and committee join in the work of evaluation and formation.

Theological Components of the Interview

• Community: The community within which the interview takes place represents the Body of Christ.

• Covenant: The interview process is the practice of Christ’s covenant.

• Hospitality: The interview participants express the nature of church. Is hospitality experienced?

Are community, covenant and hospitality interwoven in the interview process?

What an Interview Is Not

• A therapy session

• A coaching session

• An inquisition

• A rescue mission

Taken from a GBHEM power point presentation - Full presentation is available at www.gbhem.org
Risks in the Process

- The psychological model places unbalanced weight on the scores of testing or the review of the clinical psychologist.
- The diagnostic approach, searches for problems and issues to be corrected.

Common Pitfalls

- Overuse of questioning; bullet questions
- Inordinate reassurance or praise
- Interpretation
- Persuasion
- Undue identification
- Clever humor
- Domination

Overcoming the Risk

A vocational identity approach uses psychology and testing but uses them in the context of understanding the identity of a person and how that identity will develop into ministerial leadership identity.

What an Interview Is

It is an inquiry and exploration process, bound in community, covenant and hospitality, co-joined by committee and interviewee in the work of formation and evaluation, to determine the way the interviewee meets the standards of ministry as formulated by the BOM and guided by *The Book of Discipline.*

Interviewing Skills

- Preparing for the interview
- Creating an appropriate setting for interview
- Shaping questions
- Listening for what is said and what is meant
- Giving feedback
- Helping an interview group function with integrity
Interviewing Skills

- Assessing information toward decision making
- Forming recommendations
- Keeping notes and records
- Keeping confidences
- Testing assumptions
- Summarizing the interview in oral and written form

Interview Type

The decision asked for in any interview shapes the purpose and the questions.

Types of Questions to get Positive Results

- Limit restrictive questions: yes or no; factual answers
- Use open-ended questions
- Address open-ended situations
- Command questions solicit info naturally
- Choice questions lead to “going deeper”

Phases of the Interview Session

- **Team briefing** — A moment prior to the interviewee’s arrival when the team reviews the team roles, the strategy and questions (the talking points), and centers in on the arriving person.

- **Initial interview phase** — Establishes the climate of welcome, putting person at ease, states the purpose and the plan and goal.

- **Middle phase** — Turns to the purpose and talking points with an effort to identify and come to consensus about issues with balance between concern and straight-forward communication.

- **Final phase** — Reviews significant points; informs when interviewee will hear back; leave time for the person’s response.

- **Debriefing phase** — The team reviews the interview, makes a decision and prepares a report to the full board.

- **Follow-up phase** — Report to the full board and discuss follow-up, if necessary. If possible, someone should report to the interviewee.
Interview Feedback

- Feedback offered in the interview setting is given as part of the back-and-forth of conversation and helps affirm that what is meant by the speaker is heard by the listeners.

- Feedback following the interview is to be done both orally and in writing.

Interview for Certified Candidacy

- Fitness and potential effectiveness for ministry are the basic purpose of this interview.

- Exploration of the candidate’s call to ministry, relationship with God, and the ability to relate to people are fundamental questions of fitness.

- Interviewing for fitness includes spiritual, psychological and physical dimensions.

Information to Use

- Statements of call
- Statements of faith
- Recommendations
- Interest inventories
- Psychological assessments
- Background checks
- Mentor reports

Interview for Probationary Membership

- Determination of readiness for commissioning to probationary membership is the purpose.

- Look for areas of developing competency.

- This interview judges one for fitness and whether they are developing the skills to be effective in ordained ministry.

Information to Use

- Material passed on from dCOM
- Academic background
- Theological statement and understanding of the church
- Seminary reports
- Field education or internships
Interview for Ordination and Full Membership

- This interview focuses on effectiveness in ministry after a period of probationary membership.
- Are there unresolved issues or questions of fitness and readiness?
- Ask questions to get at their articulation of living out the ministry of their call—deacon or elder.

Information to Use

- Review of previous material and written work
- Reports and evaluations of the DS, SPPRC or personnel person of employer, references
- Seminary reports
- Visuals or demonstrations of their ministry

Interview for Change of Conference Relationship

- Get clear about the specific purpose of the change and the interview.
- Questions geared toward one’s readiness for the change or the return.
- Questions about one’s goals.

Interview for One from Another Denomination

- Following dCOM recommendation or satisfaction about the following:
  - Verification of character
  - Standing in their denomination
  - Ability to accept and minister within UMC church theology and polity
  - Background check, psychological assessment, credit check

A Sample of Questions

- Share something of your call and Christian experience.
- What is your understanding of the theological position of the UMC?
- What is your understanding of sacraments and their relationship to your ministry?
- What is your understanding of UM polity and doctrine and ordering of ministry? How will you support it?
Questions of Family/Life History

• How does the person describe or recall family history? Is it positive? Can the person be reflective or only describe the facts?

• Can the person differentiate from that family system to one’s ministry system?

• How does this affect one’s expectations for ministry?

Questions of Faith Identity

• How did the person come into his/her faith? Into the denomination?

• How does the person identify with the denomination? What is important to him/her?

• How is the person’s faith embodied in his/her identity and ministerial work?

Questions of Call

• Can the person recognize connections between their life story, faith development and call?

• Can the person articulate their call as a mission outside their own personal need for fulfillment?

Effective Communication/Ineffective Communication

• Lack of clarity vs. clarity about process, requirements and expectations.

• Reactivity contributes to defensiveness and impasse, vs. …

• Responsiveness blames less; stays engaged while remaining clear about who is responsible for what.

• Taking care of (being responsible for) vs. caring for the person.
Iowa dCOM Questions

Suggestions for questions from the four emphases:

Doctrine and Theology

- ¶ 335.2-4
  - God
  - Humanity
  - The need for divine grace
  - The Lordship of Jesus Christ/Role of Christ
  - The work of the Holy Spirit
  - Trinity
  - Universal salvation? Role of Christ? What’s your understanding of salvation?
  - Meaning and significance of the sacraments
  - The reign of God
  - Resurrection and eternal life
  - Repentance, justification, regeneration, sanctification
  - What are the marks of the Christian life?
  - Quadrilateral
  - Bible
  - Prayer

Worship and Preaching

- ¶ 335.5
  - Practice of ministry enriched understanding of the sacraments
  - Do you preach from lectionary or thematically?
  - Are you a narrative preacher? Can you and do you use visual images in your preaching?
    - Where do current events enter and possibly change your message?
    - Are you able to be prophetic? Are you able to deliver a challenging message? Are you committed to modeling a challenging message?
    - Are you able to be comforting?
    - Are you willing to be vulnerable? Open? Self-revelatory?
    - Are you able to be the protagonist of your message especially if what you are describing is a message about your life with which you are not proud?
    - Do you follow up on challenges or prophetic messages or are you kind of happy you weren’t tagged by your words?
  - How do you prepare a message?
    - How do you deal with the demands of the important and time constraints?
  - How do you present a message?
  - How do you evaluate your message?
  - Where does the Holy Spirit enter into the process?
  - Prayer?

If a Deacon, please ask the following:

- How do you connect the Word with the community in your setting?
- How do you participate in worship leadership?
- How do you “proclaim the word” besides preaching?
Practice of Ministry

- ¶ 335.5
  - Itinerant system if elder
  - Submit yourself to itineracy if elder
  - Relationship with other UM clergy, other clergy
  - Relationship with community?
    - Areas of visibility and influence?
  - Are you committed to the connection?
  - Personal gifts for ministry and how have they resulted in fruit
  - Practice of visitation
  - Strengths and areas in need of strengthening
  - Are you a witness to the Christian gospel? How?
  - Are you dedicated to the highest ideals of the Christian life?
  - Self-control and personal habits of wholeness
  - Peace and justice ministries? How are you involved?
  - Acceptance and celebration of the diversity of all God’s children?
  - Prayer?

Call and Disciplined Life

- Rest, relaxation, renewal
- Spiritual disciplines for introverts and extroverts
  - What are your regular practices for spiritual disciplines?
  - How do you deal with the demands of the important and time constraints?
  - Prayer as a two-way communication?
- Do you have confidence that God will work through you and that you are not the only means of achieving God’s plans?
- Going onto perfection
- How are you modeling Christ’s practice of solitude and renewal?
- How are you giving away the ministry and enabling laity?
- Are you expecting to be made perfect in this life? Love of God and love of neighbor
- Support system: Is it enough? (Enough is not really a goal; but, it may be all that one has.) Is it broad; is one individual assuming too many roles? Who is your support system? Does your support system “travel” well?
- Prayer?
Iowa Conference Interview Form for
Certified Lay Minister (CLM) Interview

Candidate Name: ___________________________________________ Date: ________________

Church Serving: ___________________________ District: __________

Action Report:

☐ Recommending Certification
☐ Not Recommending Certification

Candidate Concerns __________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

Interview Summary Paragraph: __________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

Team Members:

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

Follow-up from Interview:

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

Reports should be sent no later than 7 days following interviews.
Required Questions

• How did the School for Lay Ministry affirm that your call is to serve as a Certified Lay Minister?

• How has the community of the church affirmed your understanding of call to serve as a Certified Lay Minister?

• Describe your specific area of service that you are/will be leading or serving within your local church or the Iowa Conference.

• How are you leading and equipping your mutual ministry team?

• What are your gifts for ministry? What is an example of fruit that has come from your gifts?

• What is your understanding of grace?

• What are your plans for continued growth?

Strengths:

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/Comments
Iowa Conference Interview Form for Introductory Interview

Candidate Name ___________________________ Date: _____________

Ministry Setting: ___________________________ District: _____________

Educational Status: ☐ Enrolled in College    ☐ Enrolled in Seminary Year in School:_____________    ☐ Not Enrolled

Current Supply Pastor: ☐ Yes    ☐ No    Where? ____________________________________________

Action Report:
☐ Vote to continue candidate in process

Vote Count: _____________ Yes    ______ No    ______ Abstain

Interview Summary Paragraph:
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Team Members:
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up from Interview:
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Candidate Concerns:
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
Required Questions

Tell us about your personal journey of faith.

Briefly describe an experience that shaped your Christian life.

Tell us about your call to ministry.

At this time what are you feeling is the nature of your call? (i.e. elder, deacon, licensed local pastor, or certified lay minister)

Tell us about your leadership experiences in the church.

What are the fruit of the ministries in which you are involved?

Strengths:

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/Comments
Iowa Conference Interview Form for Initial Certification Interview

Candidate Name _______________________________ Date: __________________

Ministry Setting: _______________________________ District: __________________

Educational Status:  ☐ Enrolled in College  ☐ Enrolled in Seminary Year in School: ________  ☐ Not Enrolled

Action Report: (Individual written ballot required)

☐ Certification request affirmed (3/4 majority required)

☐ Certification request not affirmed

Vote Count:___________ Yes  ______ No  ______ Abstain

Interview Summary Paragraph: 

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Team Members: ___________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up items from Previous Interview:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up items for Next Interview:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Candidate concerns: ________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Required Questions

If initial license and initial certification in the same interview, review Required Questions on both lists.

* How do you feel your call to credentialing/ordained ministry has been affirmed? To which credential/order and why?

* How has the community of the church affirmed your understanding of call to credentialed/ordained ministry?

* What are your gifts for ministry? What is an example of fruit that has come from your gifts?

* What is your understanding of grace?

* What are your plans for continued growth?

Strengths:

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/Comments
Iowa Conference Interview Form for
Initial Licensing Interview

Candidate Name: ____________________________  Date: __________________

Church Serving: ____________________________  District: __________________

Educational Status:
☐ Enrolled in College  ☐ Enrolled in Seminary  Year in School: ____________
☐ Not Enrolled

Current Supply Pastor:
☐ Yes  ☐ No  Where? ____________________________

☐ Full Time  ☐ Part Time

Action Report: (Individual written ballot required)

☐ Licensing request affirmed (simple majority required)

☐ Licensing request not affirmed

Vote Count: _________ Yes  _______ No  _______ Abstain

Share with candidate what it means to be licensed from the Discipline ¶ 315.

Interview Summary Paragraph: ____________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

Team Members:

________________________________________

________________________________________

________________________________________

Follow-up items from Previous Interview:

________________________________________

Follow-up items for Next Interview:

________________________________________

(continue on back)
Required Questions

- How did Licensing School affirm that your call is to credentialed/ordained ministry?
- To which credential/order and why?
- How has the community of the church affirmed your understanding of call to credentialed/ordained ministry?
- What are your gifts for ministry? What is an example of fruit that has come from your gifts?
- What is your understanding of grace?
- What are your plans for continued growth?
- What is your understanding of the sacraments?
  - Do they know we have two sacraments and what they mean?
  - Do they have a United Methodist understanding of the sacraments?
- What does being a pastor mean to you?
- How are you or how will you lead your ministry setting into the mission of The United Methodist Church?
  - Do they know the mission of the United Methodist Church?
  - Can they integrate the mission of the United Methodist Church into their ministry?
- What are your plans for continued growth?
- Written questions from Iowa dCOM page 72. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/Comments
Iowa Conference Interview Form for
Combined Initial Certification & Licensing Interview

Candidate Name________________________________________________________Date: _________________________
Church Serving: ______________________________________________________District: __________________________
Educational Status: □ Enrolled in College □ Enrolled in Seminary Year in School:___________ □ Not Enrolled
Current Supply Pastor: □ Yes □ No Where? ________________________________ □ Full Time □ Part Time
Action Report: Individual written ballot required (310.1e) □

☐ Certification request affirmed (3/4 majority required)
☐ Certification request not affirmed
Vote Count: _____ Yes _____ No _____ Abstain

☐ License request affirmed (simple majority required)
☐ License request not affirmed
Vote Count: _____ Yes _____ No _____ Abstain

Interview Summary Paragraph: __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Team Members: ________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up items from Previous Interview:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up items for Next Interview:
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Checklist of things that are needed
☐ Mentor Report
☐ Psych Report
☐ Candidate Disclosure Form
☐ Background Check
☐ Statement of Call
☐ SPPRC form
☐ Charge Conference Report

Reports should be sent no later than 7 days following interviews
Required Questions

• How did Licensing School affirm that your call is to credentialed/ordained ministry?
• To which credential/order and why?
• How has the community of the church affirmed your understanding of call to credentialed/ordained ministry?
• What are your gifts for ministry? What is an example of fruit that has come from your gifts?
• What is your understanding of grace?
• What are your plans for continued growth?
• What is your understanding of the sacraments?
  O  Do they know we have two sacraments and what they mean?
  O  Do they have a United Methodist understanding of the sacraments?
• What does being a pastor mean to you?
• How are you or how will you lead your ministry setting into the mission of The United Methodist Church?
  O  Do they know the mission of the United Methodist Church?
  O  Can they integrate the mission of the United Methodist Church into their ministry?
• What are your plans for continued growth?
• Written questions from Iowa dCOM pg 73. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments
Iowa Conference Interview Form for
Renewal of Certified Candidacy Interview

Candidate Name: ____________________________________________ Date: __________

Setting: ____________________________________________________ District: ______________________

Educational Status: ☐ Enrolled in College ☐ Enrolled in Seminary Year in School: __________
☐ Enrolled in Course of Study - # of Classes Completed: ____________ ☐ Not Enrolled

Course of Study or Seminary Grade Reports must be sent to District Committee on Ordained Ministry Registrar by Sept. 1st every year.

**Action Report:** (Individual written ballot required) Number of years in Candidacy __________

☐ Renewal of Certification affirmed (simple majority required)

☐ Renewal of Certification not affirmed = Discontinuance of Candidacy (give reason in paragraph)

**Vote Count:** __________ Yes ______ No ______ Abstain

Number of times met with candidacy mentor ________________________________

Interview Summary Paragraph: ____________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Team Members: __________________________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Follow-up items from Previous Interview:

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

Follow-up items for Next Interview:

__________________________________________

__________________________________________

__________________________________________
Required Questions

What are you doing to grow your church or ministry and to reach new people for Christ?

Give us an example of its fruit.

What does following Jesus mean to you and how do you live it out?

Written questions from Iowa dCOM pg 73. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

What does your support system look like?

What are your plans for continued growth?

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/Comments
Iowa Conference Interview Form for Renewal of Local Pastor License Interview

Candidate Name: __________________________________________________________
Date: __ Ministry

Setting: ________________________________________________________________
District: _______________________________________________________________

Educational Status:  □ Enrolled in College  □ Enrolled in Seminary Year in School: ____________
Enrolled in Course of Study - # of Classes Completed: ____________________________ □ Not Enrolled

Vocation:  □ Full-time  □ Part-time  □ Student Transcripts sent to dCOM Registrar ________

Action Report: *(Individual written ballot required)*

□ Renewal of License request affirmed *(simple majority required)*

□ Renewal of License request not affirmed = Discontinuance of License *(give reason in paragraph)*

Vote Count: ___________ Yes _______ No _______ Abstain

Interview Summary Paragraph: ________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Team Members: __________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up items from Previous Interview:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up items for Next Interview:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Required Questions

What are you doing to grow your church and to reach new people for Christ?

Give us an example of its fruit.

What was the most difficult challenge you faced as pastor this past year and how did you meet it?

What did you learn from it, and how do you feel you have grown from this experience?

What does baptism mean to the church? How do you understand your role in baptism?

What does communion mean to the church? How do you understand your role in communion?

What does your support system look like?

What are your plans for continued growth?

Written questions from Iowa dCOM pg 73. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments
Iowa Conference Interview Form for Recommendation for Associate Membership

Interview

Candidate Name: ____________________________ Date: ________________
Ministry Setting: ____________________________ District: ________________
Educational Status: □ Year Course of Study Completed: ________________ □ Other: ________________
Service Requirement: Four full-time years of service as local pastor
How has this been fulfilled? __________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
Age Requirement: Reached age 40 by date of credentialing. Date of Birth: ________________ ¶322 in discipline

Action Report: (Individual written ballot required)
□ Request for associate membership affirmed (3/4 majority required)
□ Request for associate membership not affirmed

Vote Count: ____________ Yes ______ No ______ Abstain

Interview Summary Paragraph: _______________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Team Members: __________________________________________________ _______________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up items from Previous Interview:
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up items for Next Interview:
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________________
Required Questions

All of us are called by God into the “priesthood of all believers.” Share about your specific call to associate membership.

Are you and your family fully itinerant?

What responsibility comes with Associate Membership to the greater connection of the United Methodist Church?

What are some examples of fruitfulness in your ministry in the past year?

What are your goals or vision for your congregation?

Who are the marginalized in your community and how are you leading your ministry setting to minister with them?

What are your plans for continued growth?

Written questions from Iowa dCOM pg 73 Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments
Iowa Conference Interview Form for Recommendation for Provisional Membership

Interview- Elder

Candidate Name: ___________________________ Date: ______________________

Church Serving: ____________________________ District: ______________________

Educational Status: Year Seminary Completed: ___________ ½ of Miv studies must be completed

Submit transcripts to dCOM Registrar

Year Course of Study Completed: ____________________

Year Advanced Course of Study Completed: ___________ Other: __________________________

Action Report: (Individual written ballot required)

☐ Request for provisional membership on elder track affirmed (3/4 majority required)

☐ Request for provisional membership on elder track not affirmed

Vote Count: ___________ Yes ___________ No ___________ Abstain

Interview Summary Paragraph: ____________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Team Members: ____________________________

__________________________________________

Follow-up items from Previous Interview:

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

Follow-up items for Next Interview:

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________________________
Required Questions

The Board of Ordained Ministry will be looking for readiness for ministry, including demonstrated gifts for ministries of service and leadership and theological articulation written and oral.

All of us are called by God into the “priesthood of all believers.” Share about your specific call to ordained ministry.

What is your understanding of the meaning of ordination?

Are you and your family fully itinerant?

What does being United Methodist mean to you?

What leadership have you taken in your ministry setting? Tell about some formative experiences you’ve had while leading that ministry.

What are some examples of fruitfulness in your ministry in the past year?

Who are the marginalized in your community and how are you leading your ministry setting to minister with them?

Written questions from Iowa dCOM pg73. Choose one question from each category and have the individual respond to it in a written format prior to the interview. Make sure the question is appropriate for where the individual is in their ministry.

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments
Iowa Conference Interview Form for Recommendation for Provisional Membership
Interview- Deacon

Candidate Name: ___________________________ Date: ________________

Ministry Setting: ___________________________ District: ___________________________

Charge Conference (Local Church) Relationship: ___________________________

Year Certified for Candidacy: ___________________________

Educational Status: □ Seminary Master’s Degree or ___________________________

□ Master’s degree in area of specialized ministry

□ Specialized Ministry Certification or License (with 8 hours)

□ Basic Graduate Theological Studies Complete (24 hours)

(Note: Not all of these are required)

Action Report: (Individual written ballot required)

□ Request for provisional membership toward deacon affirmed (3/4 majority required)

□ Request for provisional membership toward deacon not affirmed

Vote Count: __________ Yes ______ No ______ Abstain

Interview Summary Paragraph: ___________________________

_____________________________________________________

Team Members: _______________________________________

_____________________________________________________

Follow-up items from Previous Interview:

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________

Follow-up items for Next Interview:

_____________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________
All calls are valid. If the church does not feel that the individual would not make a good pastor, please say no. This information is Confidential. It is to be shared with the dCOM but not to be discussed outside of interviews.

Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPPRC) Discernment Tool for Those Considering Vocational Ministry
(To be submitted to the District Superintendent and the District Committee on Ordained Ministry)

Name of Ministry Candidate: ____________________________

Name of Church: ____________________________

Date of SPPRC Discussion: ____________________________

The Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) of the Iowa Annual Conference has stated: The role of the pastor and the Staff Pastor Parish Relations Committee (SPPRC) of every congregation is to lead individuals through a discernment process of identifying, clarifying, and understanding his or her calling for ministry, whether in the general ministry of the church, licensed ministry, or ordained ministry. Therefore, the BOM encourages every congregation to be on the lookout for potential ministers, to preach about being called into ministry, and to have on hand both Ministry Inquiring Process and Christian As Minister as resources for those exploring the possibilities and options for ministry. Because this is such a weighty matter, the pastor and the SPPRC must know the individual well enough to recommend him/her, or not, and, further, to give the person opportunities to try different ministry settings in the local church where their giftedness can be evidenced and refined.

We recognize that all Christians are called by God to be in transformational ministry in the world as they are gifted. Ordination and licensing are particular callings by God recognized by the Church’s conferring of authority in vocational ministry. When a member of your congregation is seeking validation of a perceived calling, the SPPRC is encouraged to spend time in prayer, reading The Book of Discipline, Chapter Two— particularly ¶¶ 301-305, and using this Discernment Tool to help them clarify their ministry calling.

These questions are to be completed during a called or regular meeting of the SPPRC as you share in a time of holy conferencing with the individual. Please answer all the questions as completely as you can. Notice that some questions are to be answered by the candidate while others are to be used by the SPPRC (in confidential conversation following the interview) to evaluate this person’s potential and fitness for ministry. First, complete the “Ask the candidate questions.” Then have the candidate sign this tool before your confidential conversation. The signature affirms that the candidate’s responses are appropriately reflected in the document. Finally, complete the “SPPRC evaluation” sections and move to your final decision.

Upon Charge Conference approval, a copy signed by the pastor, SPPRC chair, and the candidate must be sent to the District office and District Committee on Ordained Ministry Registrar before the candidate proceeds to the next steps of the process. The pastor (and the SPPRC chair, if desired) will be asked to appear before the District Committee on Ministry when the individual seeks to become a certified candidate.

CALLING
A calling into representative ministry is understood as the initiative of God’s grace to choose certain persons to lead the church. Those in representative ministry may serve as ordained elders or deacons or as licensed pastors or certified lay ministers. Ministry settings may include the local church, chaplaincy, higher education, or other settings.
Your responsibility as the SPPRC is to understand the nature of representative ministry in the UMC and to help the individual understand and articulate his/her internal sense of calling, specifying how his/her ministry is to be expressed. At the same time, there is to be an external calling—a confirmation by the Church that clarifies whether they are being called to representative ministry, or not.

This is a tool that is part of the discernment process.

*Ask the candidate:*
What does it mean that Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior?

How is the Bible essential for your faith?

How do you understand your call to ministry? And how do you see your call lived out specifically in the United Methodist Church?

Is that call best lived out as a lay person or clergy?

As you prepare to represent the United Methodist Church, are there any beliefs or practices of the United Methodist Church you are still wrestling with?

What is your understanding of the requirements and authority of the various expressions of representative ministry in the United Methodist Church?

- **Ordained Ministry as an Elder—¶ 302**
  Elders lead God’s people to grow in faith and love, with most serving as pastors in charge of local congregations through Word (preaching and teaching), sacrament, order, and service. They can also serve as chaplains, teaching, or pastoral counseling.

- **Ordained Ministry as a Deacon—¶ 302**
  Deacons lead God’s people into ministry to the world through Word (teaching and may include preaching), service, compassion, and justice, often in specialized ministry. Some deacons serve in churches in roles such as ministers of Christian education or music. Many serve beyond the local church, in settings such as social service, education, health, or policy advocacy organizations.

- **Licensed for Local Pastor—¶ 315**
  Local pastors—either part time or full time—are licensed to serve as a congregation’s pastor, with responsibilities for preaching, administering the sacraments, providing pastoral care, and administrative leadership. They do this while pursuing theological education through an approved seminary or in the Course of Study.
Certified Lay Minister—¶ 271
The certified lay minister serves as the leader of a small congregation, preaching the Word, providing a care ministry to the congregation, assist in program leadership, and be a witness in the community for the growth, missional and connectional thrust.

Lay Servant (formerly Lay Speaker)—¶ 266
A lay servant is committed to the local congregation, becoming well informed of the scriptures and the doctrine, heritage, organization, and life of the United Methodist Church. He/she receives specific training to develop skills in witnessing to the Christian faith through spoken communication, church and community leadership, and care-giving ministries. This individual gives leadership, assistance, and support to the mission and ministry of the church.

**SPPRC evaluation:**
Does this person have a clear understanding of their faith and of their calling? Why or why not?

**SPIRITUAL MATURITY**
Spiritual maturity refers to more than what an individual knows or does; spiritual maturity is the imitation of Christ evidenced in the character, mindset, and actions of an individual. Leaders in the Church are expected to have grown and continue to grow in the love and knowledge of Christ.

*Ask the candidate:*
What has been your faith and church background?

How do you live out your faith?

How do you talk about God with your friends?
What is your favorite/most compelling characteristic of God? Why?

*SPPRC evaluation:*
How does this person exhibit spiritual maturity? How long have you known the candidate?

What are examples you have witnessed that this person upholds the highest ideals and behavior of a follower of Christ?

**ATTRIBUTES AND GIFTEDNESS**

Ministry is Christ-centered within a community of faith. Therefore, those in ministry must be comfortable in social settings and have relational skills in both public and private occasions.

*Ask the candidate:*
Tell us about the most important personal relationship you have with another person in your life.

What gifts do you bring to a life of ministry?

*SPPRC evaluation:*
What social and relational skills have you seen this person exhibit that will be necessary for ministry?

How does this person evidence emotional stability in his/her life?

How does this person demonstrate written, oral, interpersonal, and organizational
communication skills necessary for ministry?

**EXPERIENCE and FRUITFULNESS**

*Every individual is shaped by past experiences. Take time to reflect on how experiences evidence potential for ministry, as well as equip him/her for ministry.*

*Ask the candidate:*

What experiences in your life will help you most in ministering to others?

Tell us about ministries you have led or have had significant involvement in.

*SPPRC evaluation:*

In what ways have you seen a caring and empathetic heart in this person?

How has this person effectively led in your congregation’s ministries (e.g., classes, worship, mission work, etc.) and governance (e.g., committees)?

How has this person experienced stability and success in previous employment (if applicable)?
How will this person’s previous vocational experiences contribute to his/her ministry (if applicable)?

INVESTMENT

Because of the spiritual, emotional, and time stresses, ordained ministry can put a strain on family dynamics—more than most imagine until they have entered into full-time ministry. For Elders, add to this the demands of itinerant ministry, relocating at the direction of the Bishop according to the needs of the mission field.

Ask the candidate:
How have you prepared your family for the lifestyle changes that are inevitable for a clergy person’s family?

The bishop asks those about to be ordained a series of historic questions (BOD ¶ 336), including: Are you in debt so as to embarrass you in your work? This question takes on significance in the realization that a seminary education can cost upwards of $100,000. Local pastor and certified lay minister are options with much less weighty financial requirements.

How are you prepared to meet the financial demands of a seminary education (if applicable)?

The ordination process is a significant time commitment for completion of education, residency, and then gaining an experience base for effective ministry. Please help him/her consider this obligation in relation to their potential years of ministry (noting that mandatory retirement age is 72, while the average retirement age is 65).

What is your current educational background?
Are you ready for:

- a high school diploma if not completed to be a local pastor
- minimum of 5 years maximum 8-12 years for Course of Study (for Local Pastors)?
- a minimum of 60 hours of undergraduate studies (if not completed) to be an Associate Member?
- an undergrad degree (if not completed) if you want to attend seminary?
- 2-4 years of full-time graduate studies (depending whether Elder or Deacon) or 2 years of residency?
- Has this person considered how many years will be necessary to develop an experience base for effective pastoral ministry (studies show this is typically 7 years of active ministry)?

What are your thoughts about the time involved?

How many potential years of ministry do you foresee after ordination or receiving credentials?

SPPRC evaluation:
How do you perceive this individual’s preparedness to pursue their calling?

Candidate:

______________________________
Printed

______________________________
Signed
DECISION: Remember that "No" is an appropriate answer.

Confidential Information – to be shared with dCOM only.

Before a formal, written vote is taken, please give the following questions diligent consideration.

Please understand that if there are any major concerns or hesitations, we as the District Committee on Ordained Ministry would formally support you in saying no, not yet, or maybe.

When have you prayed for and about this individual’s call?

Do you believe this individual is called by God to representative ministry (either ordained or licensed)?

Do you believe that this person’s call can be certified by the Church?

Can you envision this person serving as a pastor or deacon in the United Methodist Church: preaching, teaching, visiting hospitals, comforting a mourning family, etc.? Why or why not?

What type of ministry or ministry setting would best suit the individual?

Is this the proper time for this person to move forward in the candidacy process or should this person do some further reflection or preparation?

What important leadership skills, gifts, personal relationships, etc. does this person have that would be beneficial in their ministry?

Are you willing to support this candidate with your prayers, your financial support, and your presence? Are you prepared to pay 1/3 of the fee for the psychological assessment ($210 as of August 1, 2018) for the psychological assessment for this candidate? Are prepared to help them financially with any additional education that they need?

SPPRC Chair: ________________________________

Printed ________________________________

Signed ________________________________

Pastor/Deacon: ________________________________

Printed ________________________________

Signed ________________________________

Charge Conference Action: ________________________________

Decision ________________________________

Date Decision ________________________________

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SPPRC Facilitator Interview Report

Form #102 (¶310.1d, The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016)

On____________________(date) I,______________________________(name of pastor) from the________________________(name of district)

met with the SPPRC of the____(name of church/charge)

for the purpose of interviewing___(name of candidate)

The interview was for the purpose of receiving a recommendation from the SPPRC to become a Certified Candidate for ministry in the United Methodist Church.

The vote of the SPPRC was:

______________ (number of Yes)
______________ (number of No)
______________ (number of Abstain)

The vote was by written ballot.

________________________________________
Signature of the pastor

________________________________________
Signature of SPPRC Secretary

________________________________________
Signature of SPPRC Chair

*Please have SPPRC Chair return the completed form and meeting minutes to the District Office and District Committee on Ordained Ministry Registrar.
The United Methodist Church

Declaration of Candidacy for Ordained Ministry

Charge Conference (Or Equivalent Body) Recommendation Form #104

I hereby declare my candidacy for ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church and request the support and recommendation of the Charge Conference or equivalent body as specified by the district committee on ordained ministry for certification as a candidate for:

Order of Deacon ________  Order of Elder _________________  License as Local Pastor ______________

Signed ___________________________  Date ______________

Signature of Declared Candidate

Charge Conference Recommendation (or equivalent body)

Let those who consider recommending persons for candidacy as ordained ministers in The United Methodist Church ask themselves the following questions which were first asked by John Wesley at the third conference of Methodist preachers in 1746. (See BOD ¶310.1d)

1. Do they know God as pardoning God? Have they the love of God abiding in them? Do they desire nothing but God? Are they holy in all manner of conversation?
2. Have they gifts, as well as evidence of God’s grace, for the work? Have they a clear, sound understanding; a right judgment in the things of God; a just conception of salvation by faith? Do they speak justly, readily, clearly?
3. Have they fruit? Have any been truly convinced of sin and converted to God, and are believers edified by their service?

Believing that ___________________________ (name of ministry candidate) is called of God and is a suitable candidate for ordained ministry in The United Methodist Church, ________________ (the recommending body) recommends him/her for certification as a candidate to the district Committee on Ordained Ministry. In making this recommendation, we attest to the fact the declared candidate has been a professing member in good standing of The United Methodist Church or a baptized participant of a recognized United Methodist campus ministry or other United Methodist ministry setting for a minimum of one (1) year, has graduated from an accredited high school or received a certificate of equivalency, and has received by written ballot a two-thirds vote of this body.

Signed _______________  Date ______________

Signature of authorized elder, district superintendent or bishop

Conference _______________  District ______________________________

*Please have Presiding Elder return completed form to the District Office and dCOM Registrar.
Statement of Fulfilment of Theological Studies

For Candidates seeking Commissioning and Provisional Membership

This form may be filled out by each candidate for ordination as a deacon or elder seeking commissioning and provisional membership and placed in the candidate’s district file before the interview by the district committee for recommendation for commissioning (¶666.8). The Book of Discipline, 2016 ¶ 324.4.a requires candidates for deacon or elder to complete graduate theological studies that include courses in the areas listed below. The Iowa Annual Conference requires that these studies be completed before commissioning and provisional membership.

Next to each required area of study, list the course or courses you have taken (or will have taken prior to your commissioning) which you believe fulfill that requirement, the institution where you took (will take) those courses, and the semester hours (or equivalent) for each class. The same class may be listed to fulfill more than one area, but do not list the hours more than once for each class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required Area of Study</th>
<th>Name of Course/Date</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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<tr>
<td>New Testament</td>
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<td>United Methodist Polity</td>
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<td>United Methodist History</td>
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Total Hours
District Committee on Ordained Ministry
Iowa Annual Conference of The United Methodist Church

RECOMMENDATION FORM
(SPRC Chair, Ad Council Chair, Layperson from the Church where you are serving)

Send by ______ to ___________________________

I, ____________, waive the right to see this recommendation form.

Applicant’s Name: _____________________________________________________________

Date ___________  Applicant’s Signature __________________________________________

Person submitting this recommendation:

Name: _________________________________________________________________

Address: ___________________________________________________________________

(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Email address: __________________________________________________________________

Telephone Number: (________)_________________________

Please respond to the following questions by typing or writing legibly.

Thank you for taking the time and effort to complete the form. Assessing a candidate’s qualifications for professional ministry is an important part of the work of the district Committee of Ordained Ministry on behalf of the Church at large and one which we take very seriously. We appreciate your contribution.

1. What official positions and/or relationship with the applicant serve as the basis for your response to the following questions?

2. How long have you known the applicant? How well do you know him/her?

3. What is your experience of the applicant’s strongest personality traits and/or his/her gifts and talents?
4. What is your experience of the applicant’s least strong personality traits and/or her/his growing edges?

5. What do you consider to be the personal and professional strengths and weaknesses of the applicant related to pastoral ministry (leadership skills, relational skills, academic preparation, preaching, visitation, counseling, administration, etc.) Attach an additional sheet if necessary.

6. The United Methodist Church is a connectional church. Persons in professional ministry are expected to support district and conference ministries. What is the applicant’s attitude toward the connectional system? How do you see the applicant functioning in that system now and in the future?

7. Would you want this person to be (or continue to be) your pastor? Why or why not? Please elaborate.

8. What other observations or comments would you care to add that you feel would be useful to the district committee on Ordained Ministry?

Signature ___________________________________________ Date ___________
Confidentiality must be maintained and respected at all times. Mentoring is a non-evaluative process. District and conference personnel and boards are aware of the confidential nature of mentoring. All parties are to take special care to avoid casual violation of this sacred trust which has the potential of undermining the individual and the covenantal relationships of the mentoring process.

Name of Mentee:  
Name of Mentor:  

Each mentor/mentee is to have a written mentoring covenant at the beginning of the relationship, this should be reviewed annually and changes made as needed.

Have you completed and signed a Mentoring Covenant?

Date when Covenant was first signed:

If applicable date when this Covenant was last reviewed:

Were any changes made?

Mentors and mentees in the group candidacy program are to meet regularly throughout the year in a period of discernment of call.

We have met times this conference year.

We the undersigned have entered into a covenantal relationship and have met for the purpose of mentoring under the guidelines of the 2016 Book of Discipline.

Mentee:  
Mentor:  

Date:  
Date:
Glossary of Candidacy Terms

Note: More details and in-depth information can be found in *The Book of Discipline* for many of the terms below. Where appropriate, paragraph numbers from the 2016 Book of Discipline are noted.

**Annual Conference**
A geographical area and organizational term. Defines a region that includes all United Methodist churches and ministries in that area. Members meet annually to approve business, set budget, and promote ministry programs. The annual conference commissions provisional clergy members, ordains deacons and elders, and licenses local pastors for ministry. The bishop appointed to that conference presides over the annual meeting and all matters affecting that conference’s ministry (¶11, ¶601-57).

**Appointment beyond the Local Church**
One category of service for provisional or ordained deacons. Deacons serve in a local church or in an appointment beyond a local church. Appointments may be to a United Methodist-related agency or other service area (i.e. social work, teaching, health ministries, etc.). Deacons serving an appointment beyond the local church also have a secondary appointment to a congregation (¶ 331).

**Apportionments**
A portion of local church offerings that churches contribute to their district and conference to support the annual conference and general church ministries.

**Associate Members**
Local pastors who have reached age 40, completed at least four years of full-time service as a local pastor, and the five year Course of Study, and have been approved by the board of ordained ministry and clergy session. They are not ordained, but are available for full-time service and are guaranteed an appointment within the annual conference. Associate members have voice and vote in every matter except constitutional amendments, ordination, and conference relations of clergy (¶321–323).

**Bishop**
Bishops are elected by lay and clergy delegates of the jurisdictional conference. Bishops oversee one or more conferences and lead The United Methodist Church. They are authorized to “guard the faith, order, liturgy, doctrine and discipline of the church” and to “lead all persons entrusted to their oversight in worship, in the celebration of the sacraments, and in their mission of witness and service in the world.” (¶401-403).

**Board of Ordained Ministry**
Each annual conference has a board of ordained ministry. The board recruits, nurtures, and supports those preparing for licensed or ordained ministry, and evaluates whether or not candidates have the gifts for ministry and are ready to serve. The board is the credentialing body for clergy in an annual conference and is responsible for continuing formation programs for clergy and for matters relating to changing conference relationships and clergy conduct (¶635).

**Book of Discipline**
The United Methodist Church’s book of law. It includes historical information, doctrinal standards, and policies that can only be changed by General Conference. It is updated and reprinted to reflect decisions made by the General Conference.

**Book of Resolutions**
Reflects The United Methodist Church’s stance on current issues of faith. General Conference delegates decide what the resolutions will be, based on petitions received.

**Book of Worship**
Contains the order of weekly services, the liturgy for Holy Communion (or Word and Table), Baptism, marriage, funerals, healing, and other types of services for The United Methodist Church.

**Cabinet**
The bishop and district superintendents when meeting as a body. All conferences have a cabinet.

**Call, Call Story, or Calling**
An experience or set of decisions, circumstances, or encouragements that lead an individual to believe God has asked them to serve in a certain ministry. Many clergy refer to being “called” to preach or serve. During the candidacy process, candidates will be asked to write and talk about how they have discerned God’s calling in their lives and how and where they believe God is calling them to serve.
Campus Minister or University Chaplain
Campus ministers and university chaplains serve on college campuses throughout the world. Some work in United Methodist campus ministries, while some work in ecumenical settings. Others are chaplains at United Methodist-related colleges and universities. Ministry with students is central, but these ministers are also concerned with faculty, staff, and administration—in other words, they work with the whole campus. Some campus ministers and chaplains are ordained deacons and elders. Others are laypeople who have received training for ministry on campus.

Candidacy
A discerning and preparatory period of time and the process by which those wishing to serve as local pastors, deacons, or elders apply, and are evaluated, by their annual conference to serve on behalf of The United Methodist Church (¶ 310-314).

Candidacy Mentor
An ordained deacon, elder, associate member, or local pastor who has completed the Course of Study, trained to provide guidance to candidates. They are assigned a candidate by the district committee on ordained ministry and assist the candidate in understanding the process and further discerning their call as they become certified and licensed or provisional members (¶ 349).

Candidacy Process
Another way of talking about candidacy (¶ 310-314).

Candidate
A person enrolled in the candidacy process who wishes to serve as a local pastor, deacon, or elder.

Central Conference
Central Conferences are the conferences for areas outside the United States. The church has seven central conferences in Africa, Europe, and the Philippines (¶ 540ff.).

Certified Candidate
A candidate who has been approved by their local ministry setting and the district committee on ordained ministry to continue the process of moving toward licensing or ordination (¶ 310.2).

Chaplain
Elders or deacons working in specialized ministry settings. Endorsed chaplains and pastoral counselors work in settings such as prisons, hospitals, the armed forces, and counseling centers (¶ 1421.5).

Charge Conference
A local church meeting that includes members of the governing body (i.e. church council) and the clergy. It meets at least once a year to review goals, elect new leaders, set clergy salaries, and recommend persons for candidacy. It is typically facilitated by the district superintendent (¶ 246).

Clergy
Commissioned and ordained deacons and elders; associate members, and local pastors serving under the full or part-time appointment of a bishop (¶ 142).

Clergy Mentor
An ordained deacon, elder, associate member, or full-time local pastor who has completed the Course of Study, trained to guide provisional deacons or elders as they prepare for ordination (¶ 349.1b).

Course of Study
Prescribed ministry classes for local pastors. Part and full-time local pastors attend the Course of Study while serving churches. The course takes at least five years to complete.

Deacon
Deacons are called by God, authorized by the church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice. They serve the community and congregation in a ministry that connects the two. Deacons are called to a lifetime of servant leadership, serving the congregation and the world. A deacon serves all people, particularly the poor, the sick, and the marginalized, and equips and leads the laity in ministries of compassion, justice, and service. The deacon's role connects the church's worship with its service in the world (¶ 328-331).

Deaconess and Home Missioner
Deaconesses (laywomen) and home missioners (laymen) are professionally trained and devote their lives to service through the Church's. They are approved by the General Board of Global Ministries and commissioned by a bishop. They may serve with any United Methodist agency or program or in agencies outside The United Methodist Church, provided that approval is given by the board in consultation with the bishop of the receiving area (¶ 1314).

Discern
Synonymous with decide. Carries an underlying assumption that the decision is made with considerable thought, prayer, study, and attention to God's call in one's life.
District
One of several geographic areas in a conference. Each church is part of a district and an annual conference. Typically 60 – 80 churches are in a district. Districts are supervised by a district superintendent. The number of districts in a conference varies depending on the conferences’ size.

District Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM)
Evaluates, certifies, and recommends to the board of ordained ministry all those applying for licensed or ordained ministry. The dCOM oversees all candidates within that district and supervises all matters related to candidacy and licensing. The committee interviews candidates, recommends candidates for provisional membership, and approves all local pastors serving within the district (¶ 666).

District Superintendent (D.S.)
Supervises the churches within a district of the annual conference. They serve as extensions of the bishop’s authority and supervise clergy within that district (¶ 419).

Elder
Those called by God, authorized by the church, and ordained by a bishop to a lifetime ministry of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service. Like all Christians, elders are committed to a lifetime of service, although this service manifests itself in different ways than deacons or the laity. The elder serves in ministry and servant leadership and gives pastoral leadership to order the life of the congregation. Elders devote themselves to the ministry of the Word, including primary responsibility for preaching and teaching the Word of God (¶ 332-335).

Endorsement
The process to ensure that pastoral counselors and prison, hospital or military chaplains are qualified and prepared to appropriately represent the Church in their ministry settings (¶ 1421.5).

Episcopal
Refers to something relating to a Bishop. For instance, an Episcopal area is the area under the supervision of a particular bishop.

Extension Ministry
Refers to elders who serve in ministry outside of a local church setting. It includes settings such as conference administration, chaplaincy, pastoral counseling, teaching, etc. The bishop appoints the elder to that position. This appointment may happen at the elder’s request and through consultation with the bishop (¶ 343-344).

Fellowship of Local Pastors & Associate Members
Provides mutual support for its members for the sake of the life and mission of the church. All local pastors and associate members shall be members of and participate in the Fellowship (¶ 323).

Full Connection
An ordained deacon or elder serves as a member in full connection to an annual conference. Their life and work is amenable to the annual conference and they are supported by and accountable to that annual conference. Except for the election of lay delegates, members in full connection have voice and vote in all matters related to the annual conference, to the clergy of that conference, to the general conference, and constitutional amendments of The United Methodist Church.

Full Member (similar to Full Connection)
Refers to an ordained elder or deacon in good standing with an annual conference.

General Agencies
The United Methodist Church has thirteen general boards and agencies that work in different ways on behalf of local churches, annual conferences and the denomination.

1. General Board of Church and Society (GBCS) www.umc-gbcs.org
2. General Board of Discipleship (GBOD) www.gbod.org
3. General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) www.gbgm-umc.org
4. General Board of Higher Education and Ministry (GBHEM) www.gbhem.org
5. General Board of Pension and Health Benefits www.gbophb.org
6. General Commission on Archives and History www.gcah.org
7. General Commission on Christian Unity & Interreligious Concerns (GCCUIC) www.gccuic-umc.org
8. General Commission on Communication (United Methodist Communications - UMCOM) www.umcom.org
9. General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) www.gcorr.org
10. General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) www.gcsrnw.org
11. General Commission on United Methodist Men www.gcummm.org
12. General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA) www.gcafa.org
General Conference
The international gathering and business meeting of The United Methodist Church that occurs every four years with about 1,000 delegates who are clergy and laity from each annual and central conference. This body decides on petitions to change The Book of Discipline and Book of Resolutions and is the only body authorized to speak on behalf of The United Methodist Church (¶ 8, ¶ 501-511).

Group Candidacy Mentoring
The opportunity for candidates to meet with a candidacy mentor and a group of other candidates. Many conferences offer this structure to provide candidates opportunities to learn from mentors and each other.

Home Missioner
See deaconess (¶ 1314).

Itinerate
Indicates an elder, associate member, or local pastor agrees to serve where the bishop appoints. This system is called itineracy. Often “itineracy”, “guaranteed appointment” or “security of appointment” are discussed as parts of this system that is the basis of the commitment between the church and clergy who serve.

Jurisdiction
A group of annual conferences within a geographical region in the United States. There are five jurisdictions (North Central, Northeast, South Central, Southeast, and Western). The Jurisdictional Conference meets every four years after General Conference and consists of delegates from each annual conference in that region. The conference elects bishops for their jurisdiction (¶512-537).

Layperson
A member of a local church.

Licensed Local Pastor
Someone who is not ordained as an elder or deacon but is appointed to preach, conduct worship, and perform the duties of a pastor in a particular setting. That person must complete licensing school, Orientation to Ministry, and receive an appointment to serve. Local pastors attend Course of Study School each year and meet with the district committee on ministry annually for continual approval and eligibility. Local pastors are not required to earn a Master’s of Divinity, or to itinerate, are not guaranteed an appointment, and usually serve smaller congregations (¶ 315-320).

Ordained Ministry
The ministry of deacons and elders who have been ordained by a bishop to serve in The United Methodist Church (¶ 301-304).

Order of Deacons/Order of Elders
A covenant community within the church to mutually support, care for, and hold accountable members for the sake of the life and mission of the church. These orders seek to respond to the spiritual hunger among clergy for a fulfilling sense of vocation, for support among peers, and for a deepening relationship with God. All ordained persons upon election to full membership in the annual conference shall be members of and participate in an order appropriate to their election (¶ 306).

Ordination
Performed by laying on of hands by the bishop. Signifies that the church affirms and continues its ministry through these persons. Persons may be ordained as deacons or elders and commit to living and proclaiming the gospel. Deacons are ordained to the ministries of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice. Elders are ordained to the ministries of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service (¶ 301-304).

Orientation to Ministry
Sponsored by the board of ordained ministry and required for all ministry candidates. Helps to build collegiality and develop an understanding the ministry of deacons, elders, and local pastors (¶312).

Pastor
A pastor is an elder, associate member, or local pastor appointed to serve in charge of a station, circuit, cooperative parish, extension ministry, ecumenical shared ministry, or church of another denomination, or on the staff of such. Deacons, who may serve similar roles as the pastor, should not be called pastors (¶339).

Polity
Refers to the rules and traditions of The United Methodist Church. It includes The Book of Discipline, history, practices, and beliefs of the denomination.

Professional Certification
Recognition that someone has met academic standards, experience, and continuing study to achieve and maintain professional excellence. Visit gbhem.org/certification for a listing of current certifications.
Professional Ministry
To make one’s living by serving in full-time in ministry. Can apply to laity or clergy.

Provisional Membership
The step in the ordination process between candidacy and ordination when a commissioned deacon or elder serves as a provisional member. Those applying for ordination serve as a provisional member for a minimum of two years, depending on annual conference policy. Provisional membership ends with ordination, or when a decision is made not to proceed toward ordination (¶ 324-327).

Seminary or Theological School
Term for post-graduate school of theology that educates and prepares people for ministry. Candidates for ordination must graduate from a school approved by the University Senate of The United Methodist Church.

Social Principles
A prayerful and thoughtful effort of the General Conference to speak to contemporary issues from a sound biblical and theological foundation. The Social Principles are a call to all members of The United Methodist Church to a prayerful, studied dialogue of faith and practice (¶ 160-166).

Staff/Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (S/P-PRC)
The committee in each church that assists clergy and staff in setting leadership and service priorities. Evaluates and approves those beginning candidacy for licensed or ordained ministry from that congregation (¶ 258.2).

University Senate
A body of higher education professionals that determines schools, colleges, universities, and theological schools that meet criteria for United Methodist Church affiliation. Ordination candidates must complete educational requirements at a University Senate-approved institution (¶ 1414-18).

Vocation
1. a particular occupation, business, or profession; calling.
2. a strong impulse or inclination to follow a particular activity or career.
3. a divine call to God’s service or to the Christian life.
4. a function or station in life to which one is called by God: the religious vocation; the vocation of marriage.

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## Course of Study Classes

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<th>Year Three</th>
<th>Year Four</th>
<th>Year Five</th>
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<td>Bible II: Torah &amp; Israel's History</td>
<td>Bible III: Gospels</td>
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<td>Theological Heritage I: Introduction</td>
<td>Theological Heritage II: Early Church</td>
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<td>Theological Reflection: Practice of Ministry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated Costs

Course of Study Costs
Here are the minimum COS Costs for a year. This information is from a student that attends UMECOSS who takes two courses per year and lives relatively close to the school so doesn’t have a lot for travel expenses.

$ 550 - registration and tuition
150 - used textbooks
350 - travel expense
250 - motel expense
50 - food expense
$1,350 - TOTAL

St Paul COS is the other most commonly attended school for Iowa students. The cost is $250/course including the registration fee and the cost of the course as of 9/1/2015. St Paul COS has a special rate with a nearby hotel that is $70/night + tax which includes breakfast and finger foods for dinner.

For students attending Course of study there is a $150 scholarship available per course through the Iowa Annual Conference. A basic scholarship application form must be completed in order to receive this scholarship.

Seminary costs
The estimated cost per semester including tuition for 12 credits, fees, books, housing, and meals starts at about $9,000. Here are some basic general costs and details about some of the costs and fees at seminaries that are frequently attended by Iowa students.

Average application fee $50-75
Enrollment deposit starting at $100
Technology Fee minimum of $50
Parking fees starting at $55 a month
Campus housing minimum of $450 a month + Minimum $100 room reservation/confirmation deposit
Meal plan approximately $350/month
Graduation fee starting at $60
Cost for official transcript starting at $5. Books around $900/semester

Tuition costs at Garrett for a Masters-Level and Non-Degree as of 1/1/2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tuition rate</th>
<th>660/credit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition rate for Clinical Pastoral Education</td>
<td>98/credit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTS research fee (course #60-693)</td>
<td>1320/term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MTS continuance fee (course #60-695)</td>
<td>660/term</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit fee for Degree student</td>
<td>330/course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit fee for Non-Degree student</td>
<td>660/course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tuition costs for St Paul Theological Seminary as of 1/1/2015
Enrolled for 6+ cr. hrs. $525 /semester Enrolled for 1-5 cr. hrs. $300 /semester Registration Change Fee $35

University of Dubuque Theological Seminary as of 1/1/2015

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Tuition rate</th>
<th>660/credit</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9-14 credit hours</td>
<td>$7,300 (per semester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 9 credit hours</td>
<td>$640.00 (per hour)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours above 14</td>
<td>$640.00 (per hour)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January Intensive</td>
<td>$640.00 (per hour)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit fee, official</td>
<td>$320.00 (per hour)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficiency</td>
<td>$320.00 (per hour)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-campus summer</td>
<td>$320.00 (per hour)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Anticipated Time Commitment

- Inquiry phase – minimum of 1 month
- Candidacy process – minimum of 6 months
- Licensing School – 1 week in Iowa; may be more lengthy in other sites
- Course of Study – minimum of 5 years
- Master’s of Theological Studies or Master’s of Divinity – minimum of 2 years
- Provisional Elder or Provisional Deacon – minimum of 2 years
- Associate Member – Completion of Course of Study (which will be a minimum of 5 years) and minimum of 60 hours toward a Bachelor’s Degree at a University Senate approved school, including a minimum of 4 years as a local pastor
Local Pastors FAQ

1. Question: Are local pastors a relatively recent phenomenon in United Methodism?

   Answer: Absolutely not. From the very beginning the Wesleyan Movement employed unordained persons for preaching and providing spiritual leadership. When the Methodist Movement first came to America there was no such thing as trained clergy except for those denominations who brought European trained ministers to lead ethnic and non-English speaking churches. There were no seminaries in America. Therefore, those early Methodist leaders happily recruited fervent men and women who were not ordained to “preach the Word”, to tend the flock, and to start new churches. From the earliest days until presently, unordained ministers (now called “Local Pastors”) have been an integral part of the Methodist Movement and The United Methodist Church. Now we have also “Certified Lay Ministers.”

2. Question: how does one become a local pastor? (¶ 315)

   Answer: A person may receive a “license for pastoral ministry” giving authority to be a local pastor when:

   1. They are a certified candidate for ordained ministry;
   2. They have successfully completed the Licensing School;
   3. They have been approved by the Annual Conference (recommended by ¾ vote of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM) and affirmed by the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) and the Clergy Session);
   4. They have received an appointment by the bishop.

3. Question: can a person remain a local pastor forever?

   Answer: Yes. You may remain a local pastor if appointed until retirement as long as you follow the criteria. The Book of Discipline (BOD) indicates that a full-time local pastor must complete the educational requirements of the Course of Study (COS) within eight years, and a part-time local pastor within twelve years.

   However, the Book of Discipline (BOD), in par. 319.4, gives the local pastor the option of remaining in a “local relationship” upon completion of the Course of Study (COS) School. The request to remain “local” is made to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry to be approved by them.

4. Question: Does the above indicate that a license for pastoral ministry is good only for one year?

   Answer: Yes. The local pastor must request renewal of the license each year when meeting with the District Committee on Ordained Ministry. If the committee agrees, it will make recommendation to the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry and the Clergy Session of the Annual Conference for approval.

5. Question: What if a person becomes eligible for the license between sessions of the annual conference?

   Answer: There is an interim process. There must be a unanimous vote by the dCOM. A license granted ad interim must be affirmed by the BOM and the Clergy Session.

6. Question: What pastoral and ministerial authority does a local pastor have?

   Answer: A local pastor has the pastoral and ministerial authority of any United Methodist minister including the privilege of officiating The Lord’s Supper, baptism, and the marriage service. However, the authority is limited to the church or churches where the local pastor is appointed. The local pastor does not have the authority or privilege of being an itinerant minister.

7. Question: If a member or an active participant in my congregation is marrying a person of another denomination and the wedding is to be in the other church, can I participate as an officiate?

   Answer: Yes, as long as the other church or wedding site is within the State of Iowa. Such participation would be understood as an extension of the ministry of the church where you are appointed minister. It would be wise to contact your District Superintendent.
8. **Question:** Can I officiate the wedding of strangers who come in from the street?

**Answer:** Maybe. If you believe officiating a marriage ceremony is a natural extension of the ministry of the church you are serving and if the marriage is in the church, the answer is yes. If the wedding is to be at the city park or at the Baptist Church, the answer is no. (And don’t forget, the Discipline requires you to provide marriage counseling in advance of the ceremony!) If you are ever unsure, call your District Superintendent.

9. **Question:** Can I officiate a marriage ceremony as soon as I receive my license for pastoral ministry? **Answer:** You may officiate a marriage ceremony in the bounds of your appointment as soon as you have a license.

10. **Question:** Are the limits placed on marrying persons also placed on serving the Lord’s Supper? **Answer:** Yes. The issue is: is the ministerial function an extension of the ministry of the church where you are appointed? Of course, you may take the sacraments to the hospital rooms and homes of your parishioners, or to a retreat of your church or district youth.

11. **Question:** What are the rules about funerals? **Answer:** There is no requirement by anyone (state or church) that a licensed or ordained minister must preside at funerals or burials.

12. **Question:** What about preaching at places other than at the church to which I have been appointed? **Answer:** There is no requirement that only licensed or ordained persons may preach. If you preach in the next county or hold a “revival” in the next state your license is not an issue. You will be preaching as a layperson. Your license gives you ministerial authority only in the church or churches where you are appointed.

13. **Question:** Where do I go if I have questions about ministry or face problems or questions for which I have no answers? **Answer:** The Book of Discipline says that you are to be assigned a clergy mentor. Call the chair of your District Committee on Ordained Ministry and inquire about this. If nobody has been assigned to you, call your superintendent. It is always better to call your superintendent sooner than later.

14. **Question:** Can a local pastor participate in the denomination pension program? **Answer:** Yes. You must participate unless you sign a waiver. To enroll, phone the Iowa Conference at 515-974-8921.

15. **Question:** Are there some special provisions in the tax laws regarding ministers? **Answer:** The tax code is in flux concerning United Methodist clergy. If in doubt, or if you have questions, consult a tax expert. The superintendent, conference treasurer or controller may be able to help you.

16. **Question:** Are local pastors required to participate in continuing education? **Answer:** Yes. After completing the COS, full-time and part time local pastors are required to earn 2 Continuing Education Units (1 C.E.U. equal 10 contact hours) per year, and report them to their Charge Conference. Provisional/Probationary members are in their supervised years program, which satisfies the C.E.U. requirement. Seminary students are in seminary and don’t need “continuing” education. Your church may have continuing education funds.

17. **Question:** If I need pastoral care or counseling and feel alone, are there resources for me? **Answer:** Yes. Phone the district office or Office of Ministry.

18. **Question:** Can a local pastor participate in ministerial associations? What if they ask me to preach at a sunrise service on Easter or to serve communion at the Baptist Church on Good Friday?
**Answer:** This would be appropriate especially if the local church has agreed that you should participate in this association as an expression of their ecumenical ministry.

19. **Question:** Can a local pastor wear a robe and/or stole?

**Answer:** You may wear a robe if you wish. An alb is particularly suitable for local pastors to wear, and may be worn by any lay person contributing to the worship service. A stole is traditionally seen as a sign of ordination in The United Methodist Church and is conferred at the time a person is ordained. It is not customary for persons to wear a stole until they have been ordained. The scapular may be worn over the alb by anyone, lay or clergy. The scapular is a sign of being a “worker” in the kingdom of God. (It derived from aprons monks would use to help collect what they were harvesting in the fields).

20. **Question:** What if I want to be an associate member of the Annual Conference? **Answer:** See *The Book of Discipline* paragraphs 321-323.

Note: Local pastors, full-time and part-time, are clergy members of the annual conference. Years ago they were laity and called “lay pastors.” This term is no longer used for local pastors.
List of Approved Seminaries
University Senate-Approved Seminaries effective July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

*Boston University School of Theology
745 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 353-3050

*Candler School of Theology of Emory University
Rita Anne Rollins Building
1531 Dickey Drive
Atlanta, GA 30322
(404) 727-6326

*Claremont School of Theology
1325 N. College Avenue
Claremont, CA 91711
(909) 447-2500

*Drew University Theological School
36 Madison Avenue
Madison, NJ 07940
(973) 408-3000

*Duke University Divinity School
Duke University
407 Chapel Drive
Box 90968
Durham, NC 27708
(919) 660-3400

*Gammon Theological Seminary
653 Beckwith Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30314
(404) 581-0300

*Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary
2121 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60201
(800) SEMINARY or (847) 866-3900

*Iliff School of Theology
2323 East Iliff Ave.
Denver, CO 80210
(800) 678-3360 or (303) 744-1287

*Methodist Theological School in Ohio
3081 Columbus Pike
Delaware, OH 43015
(800) 333-6876) or (740) 363-1146

*Perkins School of Theology at Southern Methodist University (Dallas)
Kirby Hall 5915 Bishop Blvd.
Dallas, TX 75275
(888) THEOLOGY or (214) 768-8436

*Perkins School of Theology (Houston-Galveston Extension Program)
SMU | Perkins School of Theology
Contact: Dr. Hugo Magallanes
(214) 768-4808 or hugo@smu.edu

*Saint Paul School of Theology (Greater Kansas City)
4370 W. 109th Street, Ste. 300
Overland Park, KS 66211-1397
(913) 253-5000

*Saint Paul School of Theology (Oklahoma)
Oklahoma City University Campus
2501 N. Blackwelder Ave.
Oklahoma City, OK 73106
(405) 208-5757

*United Theological Seminary
4501 Denlinger Road
Dayton, OH 45426
(937) 529-2201

*Wesley Theological Seminary
4500 Massachusetts Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20016
(202) 885-8600

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary
3003 Benham Avenue
Elkhart, IN 46517
(574) 295-3726 or (800) 964-2627

Asbury Theological Seminary (Kentucky)
204 North Lexington Avenue
Wilmore, KY 40390
(859) 858-3581

Asbury Theological Seminary (Florida)
8401 Valencia College Lane
Orlando, FL 32825
(407) 482-7500
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<td>Asbury Theological Seminary Extended Learning Program (ExL)</td>
<td>(800) 227-2879</td>
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<td>910 Center Street, Ashland, OH 44805</td>
<td>(866) 287-6446</td>
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<td>100 East 27th Street, Austin, TX 78705</td>
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<td>Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University</td>
<td>2925 Princeton Street, Fort Worth, TX 76109</td>
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<td>Eastern Mennonite Seminary of Eastern Mennonite University</td>
<td>1200 Park Road, Harrisonburg, VA 22802-2472</td>
<td>(540) 432-4000</td>
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<td>Eden Theological Seminary</td>
<td>475 East Lockwood Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63119-3192</td>
<td>(800) 969-3627 or (314) 961-3627</td>
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<td>Evangelical Seminary of Puerto Rico</td>
<td>776 Ponce de León, San Juan, PR 00925</td>
<td>(787) 763-6700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evangelical Theological Seminary</td>
<td>121 South College Street, Myerstown, PA 17067-1299</td>
<td>(800) 532-5775 or (717) 866-5775</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fuller Theological Seminary</td>
<td>135 North Oakland Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91182</td>
<td>(800) 235-2222 or (626) 584-5200</td>
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<td>Harvard University Divinity School</td>
<td>45 Francis Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138</td>
<td>(617) 495-5761</td>
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<td>Hood Theological Seminary</td>
<td>1810 Lutheran Synod Dr., Salisbury, NC 28144</td>
<td>(704) 636-7611</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interdenominational Theological Center (Gammon Theological Seminary, only)</td>
<td>700 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr., Atlanta, GA 30314-3143</td>
<td>(404) 527-7700</td>
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<td>Lancaster Theological Seminary</td>
<td>555 West James Street, Lancaster, PA 17603</td>
<td>(800) 393-0654 or (717) 393-0654</td>
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<td>Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary</td>
<td>1044 Alta Vista Road, Louisville, KY 40205</td>
<td>(800) 264-1839</td>
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<tr>
<td>Luther Seminary</td>
<td>2481 Como Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108</td>
<td>(651) 641-3456</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary of Lenoir-Rhyne University</td>
<td>4201 North Main Street, Columbia, SC 29203</td>
<td>(803) 786-5150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memphis Theological Seminary</td>
<td>168 East Parkway South</td>
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Memphis, TN 38104  
(901) 458-8232

**Moravian Theological Seminary**  
60 W. Locust Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018  
(800) 843-6541 or (610) 861-1516

**Northeastern Seminary of Roberts Wesleyan College (main campus only)**  
2265 Westside Drive  
Rochester, NY 14625  
(585) 594-6800

**Pacific School of Religion**  
1798 Scenic Avenue  
Berkeley, CA 94709  
(510) 849-8200

**Palmer Theological Seminary of Eastern University** *(Listed with Public Warning)*  
1300 Eagle Road  
St. Davids, PA 19087-3696  
(800) 220-3287 or (610) 896-5000

**Phillips Theological Seminary**  
901 N. Mingo Road  
Tulsa, OK 74116  
(918) 610-8303

**Pittsburgh Theological Seminary**  
616 N. Highland Ave.  
Pittsburgh, PA 15206  
(412) 362-5610

**Princeton Theological Seminary**  
P.O. Box 821, 64 Mercer Street  
Princeton, NJ 08542-0803  
(609) 921-8300

**Samuel DeWitt Proctor School of Theology of Virginia Union University**  
1500 N. Lombardy Street  
Richmond, VA 23220  
(804) 257-5600 or (800) 368-3227

**Seattle Pacific Seminary of Seattle Pacific University**

*United Methodist School*

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Suite 200  
4 West Nickerson  
Seattle, WA 98109  
(206) 281-2136

**Sioux Falls Seminary**  
2100 S. Summit Ave.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57105  
(800) 440-6227 or (605) 336-6588

**Union Presbyterian Seminary (North Carolina)**  
5141 Sharon Road  
Charlotte, NC 28210  
(980) 636-1700

**Union Presbyterian Seminary (Virginia)**  
3401 Brook Road  
Richmond, VA 23227  
(800) 229-2990 or (804) 355-0671

**Union Theological Seminary**  
3041 Broadway at 121st St.  
New York, NY 10027  
(212) 662-7100

**United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities**  
3000 Fifth Street, Northwest  
New Brighton, MN 55112-2598  
(800) 937-1316 or (651) 633-4311

**University of Dubuque Theological Seminary**  
2000 University Ave.  
Dubuque, IA 52001-5099  
(800) 369-UDTS or (563) 589-3112

**Vanderbilt University Divinity School**  
411 21st Avenue South  
Nashville, TN 37240-1121  
(615) 322-2776

**Yale University Divinity School**  
409 Prospect Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-5303
Licensed to Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service

A local pastor answers God’s call by serving a local congregation or extension ministry. When appointed, the local pastor performs the pastor’s duties, including preaching and teaching; leading in worship and liturgy; receiving new members; performing the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion; and the services of marriage (where state laws allow), burial, and confirmation. The local pastor’s authority is limited to the appointment setting. The local pastor is not ordained and serves by virtue of a license for pastoral ministry after completing certified candidacy, licensing school, and annual conference requirements. Local pastors are clergy members of the annual conference.

Licensed to Order the Life of the Congregation(s)

The local pastor oversees the Church’s ministry to fulfill its mission of witness and service in the world where appointed. The local pastor gives pastoral support and guidance and trains lay leadership to fulfill their ministries. The local pastor has administrative oversight of the charge and supervises the programs of the congregation(s) he or she serves.

Local Pastor Relationships

The local pastor is supervised by a district superintendent and bishop and meets regularly with a clergy mentor and the district Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM) for annual approval to serve. Local pastors receive theological education through the Course of Study each year. After completion of the Course of Study, a local pastor may complete the Advanced Course of Study to pursue provisional membership. Along with associate members, they participate in the Fellowship of Local Pastors and Associate Members for ongoing peer support while in ministry.

Students Appointed as Local Pastors

Students who are enrolled in pre-theological or theological studies in a college, university, or school of theology listed by the University Senate may be appointed as local pastors. Students may be appointed to serve either in the annual conference where their certification is held or in another annual conference where they attend school (¶318.3).
First Steps – Local Pastor

• Read and discuss *The Christian as Minister* with a clergyperson or candidacy mentor. This book is available for purchase at www.Cokesbury.com.

• Contact a pastor, an elder, a deacon, or the district superintendent to inquire about admission into the candidacy process. The district superintendent invites applicants to enroll in the candidacy process.

• Participate in a candidacy mentoring group or meet with a candidacy mentor (as assigned by the annual conference) to study *Answering the Call: Candidacy Guidebook* and refine your call to ministry.

Becoming a Certified Candidate – Local Pastor (¶310)

• Be a member of the UMC or active in a United Methodist ministry setting for a minimum of one year.

• Register online in the Candidacy Application System and pay the candidacy application fee.

• Meet with the district Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM) to discuss your call to licensed ministry, and complete all required steps to become a certified candidate as listed in ¶310-314 and determined by the annual conference.

Educational Requirements and Academic Qualifications – Local Pastor (¶¶315, 319)

• High school diploma or equivalent.

• Licensing school or completion of one-third of a Master of Divinity degree at a school of theology listed by the University Senate.

• Basic Course of Study—A prescribed course of theological education for Local Pastors that is designed to last five years.

• Advanced Course of Study (optional)—Includes 32 semester hours of graduate theological study which begins after the Basic Course of Study is completed.

Continuing Steps – Local Pastor

• Annual renewal of the License for Pastoral Ministry through the dCOM with approval by the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) and the Clergy Session.

• Receive appointment from the bishop.

• Local pastors may continue to serve in that capacity after completing Course of Study, or may apply for associate membership after meeting additional requirements.

• Local pastors or associate members may apply for provisional membership after completing Advanced Course of Study and meeting additional requirements.

The candidacy process is listed in ¶¶310-314 in *The Book of Discipline*. The ministry of the Local Pastor is described in ¶¶315-323 and ¶340 in *The Book of Discipline*. Visit www.gbhem.org/localpastors for more information. Telephone: 615-340-7416 • E-mail: localpastors@gbhem.org
Ordained to Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice

Deacons are ordained clergy who lead the people of God through ministries of Word, Service, Compassion, and Justice. Some deacons serve congregations in ministries of Christian education, music, outreach, administration, or pastoral care. Some deacons serve outside the church in such ministries as social-service organizations, schools, legal services, or as chaplains.

Ordination and Leadership

Ordained ministers are leaders who are set apart in ministries that represent God’s love. Ordination is a lifetime covenantal relationship that includes mutual care and accountability. It is founded in the sacrament of baptism, through which all Christians are called into service. Deacons are ordained into this lifetime relationship.

The office of the deacon dates back to New Testament times. The word “deacon” carries the meaning of “servant” and “messenger.” A deacon’s work includes ministries of compassion and justice and leading the faithful in these ministries. United Methodist deacons are appointed to their places of ministry. They typically find their place of service and request appointment from the bishop.

In the Congregation

In the congregation, deacons help to lead worship and assists the pastor with presiding at the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion. They also preach and teach; raise the congregation’s awareness of the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world; lead outreach ministries; and conduct funerals and weddings. Their ministry in a church includes sending the faithful into ministry outside the church walls.

In the World

Beyond the local congregation, deacons may serve in social service agencies; in church-related schools, institutions, agencies, and in places where people are hungry to know a loving God. While many of these ministries can be performed by lay people, the ordained are distinct in their accountable relationship to the church, their representative ministry (representing service to the church and the church to the world), their leadership, and their lifetime commitment to this relationship. Deacons serving beyond the local church also have a “secondary appointment” to a congregation, connecting the church to the needs of the world.
First Steps – Deacon

- Read and discuss *The Christian as Minister* with a clergyperson or candidacy mentor. This book is available for purchase at www.Cokesbury.com.

- Contact a pastor, an elder, a deacon, or the district superintendent to inquire about admission into the candidacy process. The district superintendent invites applicants to enroll in the candidacy process.

- Participate in a candidacy mentoring group or meet with a candidacy mentor (as assigned by the annual conference) to study *Answering the Call: Candidacy Guidebook* and refine your call to ministry.

Becoming a Certified Candidate – Deacon (¶310)

- Be a member of the UMC or active in a United Methodist ministry setting for a minimum of one year.

- Register online in the Candidacy Application System and pay the candidacy application fee.

- Meet with the district Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM) to discuss your call to ordained ministry, and complete all required steps to become a certified candidate as listed in ¶¶310-314 and determined by the annual conference.

Educational Requirements and Academic Qualifications – Deacon (¶324)

- High school diploma or equivalent.

- Bachelor’s degree (some exceptions apply) from an approved institution.

- Graduate degree options include:
  - Master of Divinity degree from a University Senate-approved seminary or other master’s degree from a University Senate-approved seminary
  - Master’s degree in an area of specialization and completion of Basic Graduate Theological Studies

- Alternative education available for candidates over 35 years old includes a bachelor’s degree, United Methodist Certification in Professional Ministry, and basic Graduate Theological Studies.

Continuing Steps – Deacon

- Demonstrate gifts for ministries of compassion, justice, and leadership to the satisfaction of the dCOM.

- Complete application requirements including health certificate, background checks, written theological exam, and autobiographical statement.

- Interview first with the dCOM and then with the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) to be recommended for commissioning.

- Receive Clergy Session approval for election to provisional membership, followed with commissioning by a bishop.

- After successfully completing the requirements of provisional membership, apply for recommendation by the BOM and approval by the Clergy Session for ordination and full membership.

- Be ordained by a bishop.

The candidacy process is listed in ¶¶310-314 in *The Book of Discipline.*

The ministry of the Deacon is described in ¶¶328-331 in *The Book of Discipline.*

Visit www.gbhem.org/deacons for more information.

Telephone: 615-340-7375 • E-mail: deacons@gbhem.org
Ministry of ELDERS

Ordained to Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service

Elders lead and serve the Church in the ministries of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service. Elders’ primary responsibilities are communicating the faith and proclaiming God’s Word through preaching and teaching. Elders administer the sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion and order the Church’s ministry. Most elders serve as pastors in charge of local congregations. However, elders may also serve in a variety of extension ministry (¶343) settings (such as chaplaincy or pastoral counseling). Bishops and district superintendents are chosen from among the elders, because the ordering of ministry and administering the Discipline are elders’ responsibilities.

Service

Ordained ministry is rooted in servant leadership. As servant leaders, elders embody Jesus’s teaching. For John Wesley, this meant refusing the limitations of parish boundaries and claiming the world as his parish. Today, elders lead in service by organizing the Church for its mission and service in the world. Through prophetic preaching, biblical interpretation, sacramental administration, theological reflection, and organizing the Church for ministry, elders equip Christians for their ministry of service in the world. Elders appointed to extension ministries (e.g., chaplaincy, counseling, campus ministry, and education) also carry out this task. Wherever appointed, elders carry their vows of Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service as ordained representatives of Christ’s church.

Itinerant Clergy

In more than 230 years of Methodism, the elders’ distinguishing mark has been their willingness to offer themselves “without reserve to be appointed and to serve” (¶333). Elders commit to full-time, itinerant service in the Church under the bishop’s authority. Through itineracy, the Church also assures pastoral leadership for every local congregation.

Elders who are in good standing and continue to fulfill their professional responsibilities are continued under appointment unless they are on leave and are assured equitable compensation for their ministry.

Elder as Pastor in Charge

Elders oversee the local church’s ministry as it fulfills its mission of service and witness in the world. This includes administrative oversight, evangelistic leadership, programmatic planning, spiritual nurturing, and pastoral care in the congregation. The pastor sets the vision and direction of the congregation for its witness in the world and leads the church in worship and liturgical life.
First Steps – Elder

- Read and discuss *The Christian as Minister* with a clergyperson or candidacy mentor. This book is available for purchase at www.Cokesbury.com.

- Contact a pastor, an elder, a deacon, or the district superintendent to inquire about admission into the candidacy process. The district superintendent invites applicants to enroll in the candidacy process.

- Participate in a candidacy mentoring group or meet with a candidacy mentor (as assigned by the annual conference) to study *Answering the Call: Candidacy Guidebook* and refine your call to ministry.

Becoming a Certified Candidate – Elder (¶310)

- Be a member of the UMC or active in a United Methodist ministry setting for a minimum of one year.

- Register online in the Candidacy Application System and pay the candidacy application fee.

- Meet with the district Committee on Ordained Ministry (dCOM) to discuss your call to ordained ministry, and complete all required steps to become a certified candidate as listed in ¶310-314 and determined by the annual conference.

Educational Requirements and Academic Qualifications – Elder (¶324)

- High school diploma or equivalent.

- Bachelor’s degree (some exceptions apply) from an approved institution.

- Master of Divinity degree from a University Senate-approved seminary or completion of the Basic and Advanced Course of Study.

Continuing Steps – Elder

- Demonstrate gifts for ministries of service and leadership to the satisfaction of the dCOM.

- Complete application requirements including health certificate, background checks, written theological exam, and autobiographical statement.

- Interview first with the dCOM and then with the Board of Ordained Ministry (BOM) to be recommended for commissioning.

- Receive Clergy Session approval for election to provisional membership, followed with commissioning by a bishop.

- After successfully completing the requirements of provisional membership, apply for recommendation by the BOM, and approval by the Clergy Session for ordination and full membership.
  - Be ordained by a bishop.

The candidacy process is listed in ¶310-314 in *The Book of Discipline.*
The ministry of the Elder is described in ¶332-340 in *The Book of Discipline.*

Visit www.gbhem.org/elders for more information.
Telephone: 615-340-7389 • E-mail: dom@gbhem.org
Ministry Outside Church Walls

Apart from serving God in the local church, ordained or licensed clergy may also be appointed to ministries in specialized settings which extend Christ’s love and justice into the world. These settings are usually institutions with the primary purpose of education, international security, peacekeeping, incarceration, or healthcare in nonprofit and for-profit agencies. To serve in these settings, clergy are expected to have ecclesiastical endorsement.

Endorsement is the Church’s process to ensure clergy possess the skills and capabilities needed for a particular setting, and that they are appropriate representatives of the denomination. The Church then endorses those who they affirm to serve in specific ministerial settings.

Chaplaincy and Government Employment

The U.S. Constitution’s First Amendment protects and accommodates the religious beliefs and practices of citizens. When citizens are entrusted to the care of the government (e.g., military, healthcare, prison), their life needs are the state’s responsibility. Chaplains are employed with primary oversight responsibility of religious/spiritual accommodation for these individuals.

The specialized needs of these government settings make ministry challenging. Each requires a chaplain with a strong pastoral care skill set which includes: an understanding of and ability to work with the population; counseling and critical incident stress management; leadership in worship and religious education; and active community outreach. All government settings necessitate the chaplain’s ability to function within structured protocols and government systems.

Healthcare Chaplaincy

Chaplains who serve in healthcare organizations (e.g., hospital, palliative care, hospice) help patients, families, and friends cope with sickness, disability, dying, and death. They work on a team with doctors, nurses, psychiatrists, and social workers.

Chaplains assess the patient’s spiritual needs and provide pastoral care for patients, families, and healthcare staff. They frequently conduct worship, offer sacraments, and are involved with critical incident stress management. In addition, healthcare chaplains serve on ethics committees that address complex issues in modern medicine.

Pastoral Counseling

Pastoral counselors have received specialized training to bring together the resources of scripture, faith, and the insights of behavioral science. They serve in counseling centers, healthcare institutions, or on the pastoral staff of a local church. Counselors work with individuals, families, and groups where treatment is integrated within the tradition, beliefs, and resources of the faith community.
Endorsement Settings of GBHEM’s United Methodist Endorsing Agency

- Children’s Home
- Clinical Pastoral Education
- General Hospital
- Hospice
- Life Coach
- Marriage and Family
- Mental Health
- Military (Air Force, Army, Navy)
- Pastoral Counseling
- Law Enforcement/Prison
- Retirement Home
- Specialized Settings
- Spiritual Direction
- Substance Abuse
- Veterans Affairs
- Workplace

Requirements for Ecclesiastical Endorsement (¶331.4; ¶337.3; ¶1421.5)

Those seeking endorsement to a specific setting must meet the following criteria:

1) Local pastor, associate member, provisional deacon or elder, or ordained deacon or elder.
2) Degrees from an accredited college and a University Senate-approved seminary.
3) Additional requirements as specified by the ministry setting.

The Application Process (¶1421.5)

To receive an application, contact the United Methodist Endorsing Agency (UMEA). Applicants are responsible for providing materials requested on the application to UMEA:

- Names and addresses of two personal references and your district superintendent. UMEA will contact your bishop for a reference report.
- A succinct life history and statement of your understanding of ministry as it pertains to ministry in the setting for which you are seeking endorsement.

When all materials have been received and requirements met, an interview will be scheduled.

The Interview

The interviewing committee is made up of endorsed chaplains and pastoral counselors. The interview's purpose is to understand the applicant’s perception of Christian faith as it relates to the desired ministry. Upon completion of the interview, recommendations are made for consideration by the Endorsing Committee. Areas examined include:

1) Moral and emotional stability
2) Self-evaluation
3) Theory of Christian ministry
4) Motivation
5) Continuing education
6) Sense of humor
7) Cooperativeness/diversity
8) Balance
9) Institutional vs. congregational ministry
10) Evidence of a pastoral support system

Endorsement Decisions

Endorsement is conferred or denied by the Endorsing Committee which is comprised of Higher Education and Ministry Board Members.

Visit www.gbhem.org/chaplains for more information.
Telephone: 615-340-7411 • E-mail: umea@gbhem.org
Behavioral Health Guidelines
for Boards of Ordained Ministry
Division of Ordained Ministry
General Board of Higher Education & Ministry
www.gbhem.org/bom

Overview

In the process of selecting candidates for ministry, district Committees on Ordained Ministry (dCOM) and Boards of Ordained Ministry (BOM) must discern each potential candidate’s “gifts, evidence of God’s grace, and usefulness” (¶¶ 301.2, 605.7, 635.2h, 666.9, 2012 Book of Discipline). The constant pastoral concern for both the church and candidates is to maximize effectiveness in ministry (on the positive end of the continuum) and minimize ineffectiveness and harm to all involved, both now and in the future.

These guidelines seek to describe the boundaries of healthy functioning, beyond which distortions of health become serious problems for the church and its ministry as well as for the person involved. The central question is how experiences impact a person’s inner being or spirit, and how a person’s inmost spirit transforms behavior patterns (I Cor. 13, Romans 12). Concern about a person’s mental and emotional status and behavioral patterns, including mental processing, emotional states, identity, personal boundaries, and responses to stress, are part of the pastoral concern in selecting candidates.

Since our ministries are treasures of God in earthen vessels (2 Cor. 4:7), we seek to discern how human vessels can be refined and strengthened in order to be more durable and useful in the ministry of Christ in the world. Where negatives exist, can they be sufficiently healed and transformed with the available resources to enable a candidate to incarnate love in ministry? Where positives exist, can they be used to strengthen trust, enable safety, and express grace and love in relationships without giving in to temptations and distortions? To address these concerns, the Division of Ordained Ministry’s Advisory Committee on Candidacy and Clergy Assessment (ACCCA) offers these Behavioral Health Guidelines as a resource in candidate selection. As the title suggests, these are general guidelines rather than hard-and-fast regulations. They relate to behavioral health issues, broadly defined, that the committee believes are critical to effectiveness in ministry and the avoidance of misconduct.

Our primary purposes in this effort:
- Guide and advise dCOMs and BOMs.
- Assist BOMs in establishing their own standards for assessment.
- Provide a vehicle for BOMs to raise questions about standards for assessment.
- Flag areas of concern.
The ACCCA proposes standards in the categories listed below, along with brief rationales explaining our sense of their importance. Most candidates will meet these standards immediately, but some may evidence critical behaviors or conditions that would require further exploration. Questions are provided to facilitate this exploration. If the results continue to raise concerns, the Board or Committee may need to take some action, such as postponement of the candidacy process (for further exploration or remediation) or, in serious cases, permanent disqualification. Each recommendation or guideline requires interpretation on a case-by-case basis.

The Advisory Committee on Candidacy and Clergy Assessment welcomes feedback regarding these guidelines. Email the Executive Director of Candidacy and Conference Relations for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry at candidacy@gbhem.org.

Definitions and Categories:

Category – a general area of concern.
Standard – a minimum requirement necessary to address the area of concern.
Rationale – an explanation of the standard.
Critical Behavior – a specific behavior or condition that indicates the standard has not been met.
Exploratory Question – a recommended question which may assist in assessing whether a critical behavior does indeed violate the standard.
Recommendation – a decision recommended when exploratory questions indicate that a standard is not met.

The following categories are addressed in this document:

- Alcohol Abuse/Dependence (p. 3)
- Chemical Abuse/Dependence (p. 4)
- Compulsive Gambling (p. 5)
- Divorce or Infidelity (p. 6)
- Family Violence (p. 7)
- Interpersonal Relationship Style (p. 8)
- Legal (General) (p. 9)
- Legal (Sex-Related Crimes) (p. 10)
- Mental Illness (p. 11)
- Personal Finances (p. 12)
- Physical Health (p. 13)
- Pornography (p. 14)
- Sexual Misconduct (p. 15)
- Addendum: Definitions of Improper Sexual Contact (p. 16)
Category: Alcohol Abuse/Dependence

Standard:
The candidate demonstrates no present abuse or dependence upon alcohol.

Rationale:
Alcohol abuse (short-term intoxication) and/or alcohol dependence (chronic over-involvement) are mental disorders known to impair functioning in pervasive ways. Candidates who suffer from these disorders will have greatly limited effectiveness and are at much greater risk for professional misconduct.

Critical Behaviors:
- A history of drinking to the point of intoxication.
- A history of arrest for driving while intoxicated.
- A history of an arrest for public intoxication.
- Complaints by family or others regarding the candidate’s use of alcohol.

Exploratory Questions:
- The “CAGE” questions below may be helpful: two or more “yes” answers predict alcoholism with about 75% accuracy.
  - Have you ever felt you should Cut down on your drinking?
  - Have people Annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
  - Have you ever felt bad or Guilty about your drinking?
  - Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover (Eye-opener)?
- Where there is a history of alcohol use, the following questions may be helpful:
  - Are you currently abstinent, and if so for how long?
  - If you are abstinent, how and why were you able to become abstinent?
  - What are you currently doing to maintain abstinence? (Possible answers: Alcoholics Anonymous, outpatient chemical dependency counseling, other counseling)

Recommendation:
- Consider requiring a minimum of one year’s sobriety prior to certification for candidacy.
- If any of the critical behaviors are recent (within five years), then consider requiring a formal “substance abuse evaluation” by a certified chemical dependency treatment specialist.
- If there is clear evidence of alcohol dependence at any time, then consider requiring participation in Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or equivalent program and continued involvement in such a program for not less than five years prior to certification for candidacy.
Category: Chemical Abuse/Dependency

Standard:
The candidate demonstrates no present abuse or dependence upon either non-prescribed pharmacologic agents or prescribed medications.

Rationale:
Chemical abuse and/or dependence are mental disorders known to impair functioning in pervasive ways. Candidates who suffer from these disorders will have greatly limited effectiveness and are at much greater risk for professional misconduct.

Critical Behaviors:
- Any use of illegal or non-prescribed substances, including but not limited to marijuana, cocaine, hashish, hallucinogens, sedatives, amphetamines or other stimulants.
- Misuse of prescribed pharmacological agents of any type.

Exploratory Questions:
- What is your history of chemical abuse or dependency?
- Are you currently abstinent, and if so, for how long?
- If you are abstinent, how and why were you able to become abstinent?
- What are you currently doing to maintain abstinence? (possible answers: Narcotics Anonymous, outpatient chemical dependency counseling, other counseling)

Recommendation:
- If the history reveals occasional and/or experimental use limited to an adolescent period, then consider requiring not less than five years of sobriety prior to certification for candidacy.
- If the history reveals any adult use of illegal substances or any misuse of prescribed pharmacological agent, then consider requiring a formal chemical dependency assessment from a credentialed chemical dependency treatment specialist. A period of not less than five years of sobriety prior to certification for candidacy would also be appropriate.
Category: Compulsive Gambling

Standard:
The candidate does not engage in persistent problematic gambling.

Rationale:
Compulsive gambling can quickly lead to substantial debt and reflects poor discipline, impulse control, and may mask underlying substance abuse, personality disorders, or mood disorders.

Critical behaviors:
The candidate gambles with increasing amounts of money, the candidate has made repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling, or has sustained financial losses due to gambling, resulting in debts.

Exploratory questions:
- What is your history with gambling?
- Are you currently abstinent from gambling? If so, for how long have you been abstinent?
- Under what circumstances are you vulnerable to relapse?
- What is your plan to deal with thoughts and impulses to gamble?

Recommendations:
- The candidate should have a minimum of three years of consistent abstinence from gambling.
- All gambling debts, including personal loans, should be paid in full before entering candidacy. The candidate remains abstinent from any underlying substance abuse.
- Any underlying mental/emotional disorder has been successfully resolved.
Category: Divorce or Infidelity

**Standard:**
If the candidate has been divorced, or if there is evidence of infidelity, the candidate must have done sufficient exploratory and reparative work to demonstrate and/or articulate the impact of the health of married life on quality of ministry.

**Critical Behaviors:**
- A divorce in the past three years.
- A history of having been married more than twice.
- A history of infidelity.

**Exploratory Questions:**
- If a recent divorce:
  - What steps have you taken to understand the nature of your own contribution to the dissolution of the marriage?
  - What steps have you taken to move yourself through a healthy grief process?
- If multiple marriages:
  - What steps have you taken to identify and deal with any dysfunctional patterns in intimate relationships?
- In either case:
  - Have you maintained fidelity in marriage? If not, what steps have you taken to understand your actions and decisions so as to safeguard current or future marriage covenants?

**Recommendation:**
- If there is a recent divorce (within 2-3 years), then the candidate should be able to articulate any dysfunctional patterns in intimate relationships and have taken steps to safeguard current or future marriage covenants.
- If there is insufficient evidence that sufficient exploratory or reparative work has been done, the Board may wish to recommend or require a course of psychotherapy and/or other conditions, such as a delay of one year.
Category: Family Violence

**Standard:**
The candidate has a history of resolving family conflict in a nonviolent manner.

**Critical Behaviors:**
- Any report or complaint (against the candidate) of family violence.
- Any history that a law enforcement unit has been called to the candidate's residence because of his/her behavior.
- Any report or complaint (against the candidate) to protective services for inappropriate treatment of children or adults.
- Any history of protective orders against the candidate.

**Recommendation:**
- The candidate shall ordinarily have not less than three years without reports as described.
- The presence of any critical behaviors requires an investigation into the facts and circumstances and an appropriate period may be required prior to certification for candidacy or continuance.
- The candidate shall acknowledge his/her behaviors and may have entered into family counseling or other appropriate treatment.
Category: Interpersonal Relationship Style

Standard:
The Candidate displays no significant impairment in his/her capacity to relate to others.

Critical behaviors:
- The Candidate is abrasive, or arrogant, in manner.
- The Candidate is obsequious or unusually passive.
- The Candidate displays emotions inappropriate to the circumstance.

Exploratory Questions:
- How well do you relate to authorities?
- How wide is your circle of friends? How do you maintain contact with them?
- Describe your range of emotions; for example, “What makes you cry?”
- How often do you become sad or tearful?
- What generates rage in you? How often?
- How do you feel now? How anxious, or uncomfortable are you?
- (If apparent) You seem sad... tearful.... annoyed... (as the circumstances warrant), how often do you experience these feelings?
- Tell us when your expression of feelings, of any kind, has caused problems for you.

Recommendations:
- The more intense or troubling the range of emotions, the more important the need for direct consultation with a mental health practitioner. The Board may wish to bring in its own mental health consultant in order to evaluate the candidate’s capacity to relate to others in ministry.
- The candidate should not display any emotions of such intensity or nature as to impair his/her ability to relate clearly and reasonably with the committee, team, or Board conducting an interview.
- If any display of affect is troubling to the interviewing entity, the candidate must acknowledge that fact, and demonstrate the ability to articulate a plan of intervention, and expresses willingness to engage such a plan.
Category: Legal (General)

Standard:
The candidate shall be respectful of the law and evidence legal responsibility in personal habits.

Rationale:
This may not, on the surface, appear to be a behavioral health issue, but similar issues around maturity, discipline, and judgment come into play. In addition, one’s approach toward the law often is a barometer of one’s respect for authority generally, and unresolved authority issues may significantly hamper clergy effectiveness.

Critical Behaviors:
• More than three moving violations (traffic) within the preceding three years.
• An arrest or conviction for any misdemeanor.
• An arrest or conviction for any felony.
• Note: "Conviction" includes a “no contest” plea without admission of guilt, deferred adjudication and/or probation.

Recommendation:
• Candidates may have no more than three moving violations (traffic) within the preceding three years.
• A history of arrest for any misdemeanor or felony requires investigation of the circumstances of the arrest including review of the offense (police) report. Results of the investigation may require an appropriate period without history of difficulty or further arrest prior to certification for candidacy or continuance.
• A history of conviction for any felony is, under most circumstances, permanently disqualifying.
Category: Legal (Sex-Related Crimes)

Standard:
The candidate shall have no history that poses risk of sexual harassment, sexual assault to adults or children, nor history of any sex-related offense.

Critical Behaviors:
- Treatment for any sex-related crime.
- Arrest, conviction, or written accusation for any sex-related crime.
- Written allegations of any sex-related crime.

Recommendation:
- If the candidate has committed a sex-related crime, he or she should be permanently disqualified.
- Certainly the candidate is entitled to be considered innocent until proven guilty, so a written accusation or arrest alone is not sufficient for disqualification, but either one would raise significant questions which the Board would need to explore in depth.
- The recommendation for permanent disqualification reflects the massive legal exposure an Annual Conference would take on were it to place in ministry a known sex offender. Behind that reality, however, is the awareness that currently available treatments for such offenses are of limited utility, with high rates of recidivism.
Category: Mental Illness

Standard:
The candidate has no current or recurring disqualifying psychological impairment.

Critical Behaviors:
- The candidate has received a diagnosis of schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, any other psychotic disorder, or any other major mental illness. Note: This category includes obvious situational anxiety or depression as may be seen in interviews, including, but not limited to, shaking, trembling, tearfulness, inability to speak, etc.
- The candidate has received a diagnosis of a personality disorder.
- The candidate has been hospitalized for psychiatric treatment.
- The candidate has been prescribed psychiatric medications (including antidepressants and/or anxiolytics).
- The candidate has had suicidal ideation, or has attempted suicide.

Exploratory Questions:
- Describe the history (sequence) of your treatment for your difficulties.
- What specific potential vulnerabilities do these difficulties create for your ministry, and how do you see yourself protecting both yourself and the people you would serve?
- Should your symptoms return what is your plan to address them?
- Would you be willing to authorize communication between those who have treated you and this committee?

Recommendation:
- The more severe the psychiatric impairment, the more important the need for direct consultation with the treating mental health practitioners. The Board may wish to bring in its own mental health consultants in order to evaluate the candidate’s situation.
- The candidate has a history of remission from any moderately-to-severely impairing conditions for not less than five years without necessity for psychiatric hospitalization, though treatment may continue.
- The candidate has a history of responsible management of any mildly-to-moderately impairing conditions for not less than five years, and has an effective treatment program in place.
Category: Personal Finances

Standard:  
The candidate is not in debt so as to embarrass the church and him or herself.

Rationale:  
While this may not, on the surface, seem to be a behavioral health issue, personal financial management has to do with general maturity, including the ability to set priorities, maintain discipline and delay gratification. Financial difficulties may also raise concerns about judgment and impulse control.

Critical Behaviors:  
- The candidate has been reported to a credit bureau for nonpayment.  
- The candidate has a history of a personal bankruptcy.  
- The candidate has had money judgments filed against him/her.

Exploratory Questions:  
- Describe the history (sequence) of your difficulties.  
- Are there extenuating circumstances (possible mitigating circumstances: major medical expenses, divorce, etc.)?  
- Note: Business failures and unemployment are not necessarily mitigating conditions, but require further exploration to assess if the business failures reflect poor judgment, or poor planning, and if unemployment reflects job related difficulties, or work inhibition.

Recommendation:  
- If the candidate has a history of having been reported to the credit bureau, then three years of a good credit history is recommended.  
- If the candidate has a history of a personal bankruptcy, then five years of good credit is recommended.  
- If the candidate has a history of money judgments, then it is recommended that the judgments be satisfied prior to continuance.
Category: Physical Health

Standard:
The candidate demonstrates no obvious physical health concerns.

Rationale:
Neglect of physical health is known to impair function in pervasive ways. Responsible preventive health care maximizes the functional abilities of the individual and minimizes the health care costs to the annual conference. The physical health concerns listed below may have a strong psychological component, and may reflect psychological disorders.

Critical behaviors (considered in cultural context):
- Obesity (Body Mass Index (BMI) of 30-40 is obese, while a BMI over 40 marks extreme obesity).
- Markedly underweight (BMI is less than 18.5).
- An un-treated, chronic, medical condition such as hypertension, diabetes, etc.
- Non-compliance with prescribed medical treatment for any condition.

Exploratory Questions:
- How do you evaluate your overall physical health?
- What steps do you take to care for your physical health?
- When was your last medical checkup?
- Do you have any current or chronic health problems? If so, what steps are you taking to care for yourself?
- How does your physical health impact your ability to be an effective minister?

Recommendations:
Candidates should be able to articulate their plans for physical health care. Candidates with medical problems should demonstrate medical consultation and cooperation with treatment plans.
Category: Pornography

**Standard:**
The candidate has no present use/dependence upon pornography.

**Rationale:**
Dependence upon pornography is known to impair functioning in pervasive ways, including impaired relationships, time lost to sleep and work, and negative self-esteem.

**Critical Behaviors:**
- A history of being disciplined or dismissed from a job because of accessing pornography.
- A history of regularly visiting pornography sites.
- Downloading pornography from a site.
- Erasing computer history files in an effort to conceal pornography sites.
- Time on pornography sites takes away from or prevents doing other tasks and activities.

**Exploratory Questions:**
- Are you currently abstinent, and if so for how long?
- If you are abstinent, how and why were you able to become abstinent?
- What are you currently doing to maintain abstinence?
- What is your understanding of how pornography functioned in your life?

**Recommendation:**
If the candidate is not abstinent, require participation in Sex Addicts Anonymous, Sexual Recovery Anonymous, Sexual Compulsives Anonymous, or similar group.

**Recommended Reading:**

**Websites for support:**
- [www.clergyrecovery.com](http://www.clergyrecovery.com)
- [www.netaddiction.com](http://www.netaddiction.com)
- [www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org)
- [www.healthysex.com](http://www.healthysex.com)
Category: Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment

Standard:
The candidate has no history or complaints of sexual misconduct or charges of sexual harassment having been brought against him/her.

Rationale:
The role of ministry carries with it an authority and power differential that can create a trust and vulnerability on the part of those entrusted to one's care. It is thus imperative that the candidate understands this differential and demonstrates good capacity to maintain sexual boundaries.

Critical Behaviors:
- A history of one or more complaints or charges (either formal or informal) of sexual misconduct, or sexual harassment.

Exploratory Questions:
- Have you ever had a complaint or charge (either formal or informal) of sexual misconduct or sexual harassment brought against you? If so, describe the circumstances, and your understanding of the reason for the complaint or charge.
- What steps have you taken to insure that the behavior does not occur in the future?

Recommendation:
- The committee should explore with the candidate the steps the candidate has taken to identify and understand and deal with the psychological vulnerabilities that contributed to the behavior, and what safeguards the candidate has put into place to guard against the possibility of similar behavior in the future.
- The candidate should have no evidence of sexual misconduct for a minimum of three years.
- A candidate must articulate a plan to insure that such behavior is unlikely to recur. This plan may include intensive psychotherapy and/or ongoing supervision, or other conditions required by the Board of Ministry.
- Generally more than one complaint or charge should be considered grounds for permanent disqualification for ministry.
Definitions and Examples of Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment

**Sexual Misconduct:**
Incorporates a range of behaviors that are sexual in nature, nonconsensual, and has the purpose or effect of threatening, intimidating or coercing another person and usually involves a power and authority differential. This may occur in person or through social media. Some examples are:

- Stalking
- Voyeurism
- Making nonconsensual photographs, video, or other visual or auditory recordings of a sexual nature of another person, which may or may not involve sharing such recordings
- Sharing or displaying pornographic material
- Sexting
- Requesting a date
- Kissing and or fondling
- Intercourse

**Sexual Harassment:**
Includes unwelcomed comments and conversations that are sexual in nature, usually where there is a power and authority differential. It may include or imply a promise of rewards in exchange for sexual favors. This may occur in person or through social media. Some examples are:

- Making sexual comments about an individual's appearance or body
- Suggesting that an individual should dress in a sexual manner
- Initiating conversation regarding the sexual problems, preferences, or fantasies of either party
- Telling sexual jokes
- Touching an individual when not invited