



West Ohio Conference
The United Methodist Church

District Committee on Ordained Ministry

HANDBOOK

Updated 2023



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Purpose of this Handbook

Greetings! Thank you for your willingness to serve on one of the West Ohio Conference District Committees on Ordained Ministry. The task of accompanying persons as they explore ministry options, clarify call, and seek credentialing is a privilege and a holy responsibility. Your participation will help shape the church now and for the future. Caring for those who are discerning call and journeying through the process makes us collectively responsible to God, the candidates, our local churches, and to one another. It is with great appreciation that you are part of the work with your dCOM.

This handbook is intended to accomplish four goals:

- **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 do a thorough and careful interview.
- **Second**, the WOC 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.
- **Third**, we also seek to provide a fair and safe interview space for each person meeting with the dCOM. *Each person is an individual with sacred worth. We hope to honor each individual with respect and dignity as he or she seeks an opportunity to serve in credentialed ministry. The ongoing development of cultural competency is an expectation of the members of our dCOMS.*
- **Fourth**, 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 of Jesus. The Effectiveness in Ministry definition for the West Ohio Conference (included in 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 Vice-Chair of the Board of Ministry, Meshach Kanyion, mkanyion@friendshipwyo.org. You may also find much of this information on the conference website at: www.westohioumc.org/conference/district-committee-ministry.

Please join me in ensuring that our work is always fair, rigorous, Wesleyan, and embodies Cultural Competency.

Thanks, and may God bless you in this awesome and holy task!

Rev. Donnetta Peaks

Director of the Office of Ministry

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Determinants of Clergy Effectiveness

The 2012 General Conference attempted to remove the language that some describe as security of appointment from *The Book of Discipline*, but this action was deemed unconstitutional by the Judicial Council. While there has been a process for addressing ineffectiveness in the Discipline for several quadrennia in the Administrative Complaint Process, it has been left to each Annual Conference to determine the definition of clergy effectiveness, and develop a fair and just process of implementation.

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

Biblical and Theological Foundation for Effectiveness in Ministry

1 Peter 2:9 reminds us that all baptized Christians are *“chosen by God for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be a holy people, God’s instruments to do his work and speak out for him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference he made for you.”*^{*} In the life of the church, certain persons are set aside to follow in Christ’s footsteps as leaders. *The Book of Discipline* names these persons as those who are not only called by God but are also those whose gifts, evidence of God’s grace, and promise of future usefulness are affirmed by the community (par. 301).

The idea that a promise of usefulness must accompany the call to ordained ministry is supported by Jesus’ speech to the disciples in John 15:16 when he says, *“You didn’t choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you could go and produce fruit and so that your fruit could last. As a result, whatever you ask the Father in my name, he will give you.”*^{*} Ministers are called not only to be useful, but to be able to witness to the fruits that have grown out of that usefulness.

The question is how to measure and judge those fruits in a variety of contexts.

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.+

^{*}All Scripture quotations are from THE MESSAGE: The Bible in Contemporary Language © 2002 by Eugene H. Peterson.

+Paraphrased from “Supervision as a Means of Sanctifying Grace” by Gwen Purushotham.

Definition of Effectiveness in Ministry

An effective clergy leader in the West Ohio 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 adheres 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 is measured by average worship attendance.
- **Radical Hospitality:** Disciples make new disciples (number of baptisms and professions 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..)
- **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 (BOM). All actions are recommendations to the Board of Ordained Ministry and shall be reported yearly to the Board through the Mid-Year Report 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 (in West Ohio, Candidacy Summit)
2. Introductory interviews of candidates
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 bi-annual renewal of certification

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.

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 who may be named Chair.
- The district superintendent who shall not be named Chair.
- At least three professing members of local churches.
- 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 BOM and approved by the Annual Conference.

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 35 before conducting any interviews.

- Are you interviewing someone who has not yet begun the process & is considering candidacy?
(*Introductory Interview, page 39 & page 61*).
 - Does this person articulate a God call?

- Are you interviewing someone requesting certification?
(*Certification Interview, page 40 & page 63*)
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 41 & page 65*)
 - 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 42 & page 69*)
 - Does this person demonstrate an increasing fitness for ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone who is requesting a license renewal?
(*License Renewal Interview, page 43 & page 71*)
 - Does this person demonstrate increasing faith, fire, and fruit for pastoral ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone who is requesting Associate Membership?
(*Associate Interview, page 45 & page 73*)
 - Does this person demonstrate effectiveness in ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone requesting provisional membership as an elder or deacon?
(*Provisional Elder, page 46 & page 75*) (*Provisional Deacon, page 46 & page 77*)
 - Does this person demonstrate a readiness for ministry?

- Are you interviewing someone requesting to become a Certified Lay Minister?
(*CLM, page 38 & page 55*)
 - 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 West Ohio Conference?

dCOM Leadership Job Descriptions

District Superintendent

- Receives letter from candidate as outlined in the Candidate Step-by-Step Guide (page 17).
Copy also goes to dCOM chair/registrar.
- Interviews candidate to assess readiness to enter candidacy.
 - If ready, the Office of Ministry is notified. An introductory dCOM interview may be scheduled.
 - If there are reservations for any reason, the candidate interviews with the dCOM.
- Assists the dCOM chair in scheduling candidate for an Introductory Interview.
- At the appropriate time, assigns an elder and gives approval for Charge Conference interview 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.
- Reviews the Annual Conference Mid-Year Report to verify all certified candidates and local pastors are listed.

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, possibly assists in the DS Interview.
- Following the DS interview to assess candidacy readiness, schedules an Introductory Interview with the dCOM.
- Schedules Certification Interviews with candidates who have completed the Candidacy Summit Process and submitted all required documents. These interviews should be scheduled in a timely fashion. All documents are due one month prior to the interview.
- Writes letter to each candidate regarding the results of the interview and recommended action with a copy uploaded to the candidate's electronic file.
- Provides oversight for all dCOM leaders.
- Ensures that the dCOM interviews candidates at the appropriate time with the correct documents present.
- Serve as the Board of Ordained Ministry representative to dCOM.
- Assists in training members of the dCOM.
- Works with the district superintendent and registrar to complete and review the Mid-Year Report.

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.
- Works with the district superintendent and chairperson to complete and review the Mid Year Report.

Secretary

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

Office of Ministry/ Conference Candidacy Coordinator

- The conference coordinator will receive referrals from the district superintendent of those persons who are interested in entering the Candidacy Summit Process.
- The conference coordinator will invite the candidate into the Candidacy Summit Process.
- The conference coordinator will oversee the candidate's entry into the online systems.
- Through the Candidacy Summit Process the conference coordinator will apply for and administer the psychological tests as determined by the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry.
- Through the Candidacy Summit Process the conference coordinator will assign the candidate to a cohort group with two trained mentors.
- The conference coordinator will keep the district superintendent and dCOM informed, as necessary, as to the progress of each candidate.
- Oversees the uploading of: the psychological report, theological papers, and other pertinent information into the electronic file.

Confidentiality

The definition of confidentiality as stated on pages 13-14 of *Fulfilling God's Call- Guidelines for Candidacy* is affirmed as the West Ohio 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. (As of 2013, this is completed in the Candidacy Summit Process covenant)
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 of disagreement, the candidate may add comments to the statement. (As of 2013, this is completed in the Candidacy Summit Process covenant)

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. If the mentor is on the District Committee, he/she will leave during the discussions in the plenary but return for 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 but will return to vote.
3. This resolution reaffirms the WOC Board's policy that no additional information may be offered that was not already in the file prior to the file closing date. Exceptions may only be when there is new knowledge of required reportable offenses (criminal, Discipline, or WOC ethics document.)

—West Ohio Conference Board of Ministry 5/6/10

PassageUMC File Confidentiality Agreement

In exchange for the receiving of candidacy files through the PassageUMC, dCOM members will agree in writing (a WOC form is available as a sample) to the following:

- 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 member agrees to delete the files from their hard drive and e-mail within two days of interviews.
- The ministry files and the details of which members agree to view personally and not display or share with anyone else.

West Ohio Candidacy Summit Process

Candidate Step-by-Step Guide

Updated 2023

Candidate's name: _____

Step 1. Prior to Candidacy Summit

Date

completed

- _____ Contact a clergy-person in your ministry setting or another United Methodist clergy.
- _____ Read and discuss *The Christian as Minister* with her/him.
- _____ Be a member of a UMC or a baptized participant of a recognized UM campus ministry or other UM ministry setting for one (1) year.
- _____ Send letter by email to your District Superintendent AND copy your District Committee on Ordained Ministry Chair/Registrar, Indicating the following:
 - Completion of *The Christian as Minister* and e-mail/phone number of minister
 - Name and contact information of your ministry setting (local church/campus ministry etc)
 - Involvement in your ministry setting
 - Statement of call (half-page)
 - Request entrance into the Candidacy Process
- _____ Attend interview with District Superintendent.

If ready, the Office of Ministry is notified. An Introductory District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM) Interview may be scheduled. If there are reservations for any reason, the candidate interviews with the dCOM. The District Office notifies the Office of Ministry.
- _____ Receive Summit Information from the Office of Ministry.

Step 2. Candidacy Summit Registration (West Ohio Forms and PassageUMC)

West Ohio Candidacy Tracks includes the GBHEM Candidate & Psychological Assessment Tracks

Due Dates: July 1 (Summer Summit) or December 1 (Winter Summit)

All forms can be found at www.westohioumc.org/conference/candidacy-summit-documents
Submit the following to Passage UMC Candidacy Tracks (user profile, mentors & tracks)

- _____ Autobiographical Statement Form (*Complete and submit in PassageUMC*)
- _____ Permission to Release Personal Information Form (*Complete and submit in PassageUMC*)
- _____ Notarized Statement (*Complete and submit in PassageUMC*)
- _____ Complete on-line registration for the Summit Retreat (*go to westohioumc.org and click on "training & events"*)
- _____ Payment for Summit Retreat (\$300)*

****Retreat payment is a part of the online Summit registration or a check can be mailed separately.***
After registering for the Summit you will receive an electronic copy of the Candidacy Guidebook

Passage UMC (Note: all of the Passage steps are completed electronically)

_____ *West Ohio Psychological Assessment Track*

Complete the following on Passage UMC

- The MAS (Ministerial Assessment Specialist) will be assigned to you at that step.
- Release of Information
- Personal Data Inventory
- 3 Personal/Professional References should be requested. The completed Reference forms should be returned to you and uploaded into PassageUMC. (You can ask the same people but these are different from what is requested later in the process.)
- Complete electronic self-assessment (A link to the assessment will be sent to your e-mail once the Reference step is complete.)

_____ Email Ms. Susan Thomas, sthomas@wocumc.org and Rev. Donnetta Peaks, dpeaks@wocumc.org, to confirm that you are fully registered for the Summit Retreat.

Prepare for Summit Mentoring Group (Complete prior to Summit Retreat)

_____ Form a Prayer team— Invite a 3-5 person team who will pray for you during this journey

_____ Read 1 Samuel 3, Esther 1-4; 8, Acts 9:1-31

_____ Reflection Exercise: Write your call story. (2 page maximum)

_____ Read and journal exercises in Candidacy Guidebook pgs. 11-33

_____ Complete River of Life assignment

Step 3. Candidacy Summit Attendance (*July or January*)

_____ Two Mentoring Group Sessions

_____ Photograph taken by Summit Photographer (if necessary)

_____ Take Psychological Assessment

Step 4. Post-Candidacy Summit

Mentoring Group Sessions

_____ Mentoring Group Session Three

_____ Mentoring Group Session Four

_____ Mentoring Group Session Five

_____ Mentoring Group Session Six

Psychological Assessment

_____ Meet with MAS (Ministerial Assessment Specialist). The MAS will contact you to schedule an appointment about one month after the Summit Retreat.

_____ Pay \$350 assessment fee to MAS at the time of interview.

_____ Meet with mentor(s) to review assessment report (You will receive a copy and one will be sent to the Office of Ministry)

_____ Mark Assessment Interview Complete in Passage UMC

Step 5. Preparation for dCOM Certification Interview

Date _____
Completed _____

- _____ Meet with mentor(s) to review mentor report and mentor will upload the report to PassageUMC.
- _____ Submit transcript or copy of diploma providing proof of graduation from accredited high school or certificate of equivalence to PassageUMC.
- _____ Complete physical and submit medical report (*Form #103*) to PassageUMC.
- _____ Contact three references to complete the **dCOM Personal Reference Form** and submit to PassageUMC.
The references used as part of the References on Step 2 do NOT apply because they are sent directly to the MAS.
You can, however, ask the same references for this step. (No family members.)
- _____ Contact Pastor AND dCOM Chair to schedule a PPRC meeting at your church (*dCOM Representative facilitates meeting*)
PPRC Meeting Date: _____ / _____

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

- _____ Write responses to *The Book of Discipline* 310.2a (i-vi)
- _____ Answer Wesley's historic questions (*The Book of Discipline* ¶310d)
- _____ Provide a signed agreement to highest ideals of the Christian life (*The Book of Discipline* ¶310.2d)
- _____ Complete all of the above and submit to PassageUMC.

PPRC interview

dCOM facilitator will send minutes and completed Form #102 to the District Office.

- _____ Recommended (*Pastor shall contact the DS to request a special session of the Charge Conference & schedule a meeting at your church to request approval.*)
- _____ Not Recommended (*Candidate contacts dCOM chair*)

Charge Conference

Presiding Elder will send completed Form #104 to the District Office. 3/4 majority 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

dCOM Chairperson completes Form 113. 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.)

_____ Mark complete Appearance before the District Committee in PassageUMC.

_____ Contact Mentor to fill-out Report of Completion in PassageUMC.

_____ Confirm with your mentor that the Close Track step is complete in PassageUMC.

Financial Obligations during Candidacy

- Total \$300 for In-person Summit Retreat and Background Check Payable to: West Ohio Conference.
The Retreat and Background check can be paid as part of the on-line Summit registration or a check can be mailed separately.
- \$350 for your Psychological Assessment Interview
Payable to the MAS (Ministerial Assessment Specialist) at the time of your interview

Important Dates

- December 1; Winter Summit Registration Deadline
(All West Ohio and PassageUMC steps must be received by this date)
- January 13-14 2024; Candidacy Summit Retreat at the West Ohio Conference Center
32 Wesley Blvd, Worthington, OH 43085.
- July 1; Summer Summit Retreat Deadline
(All West Ohio and PassageUMC steps must be received by this date)
- July 28~29 2023; Candidacy Summit Retreat at the West Ohio Conference Center 32
Wesley Blvd, Worthington, OH 43085.
Anticipated 2024 Summer Date July 27-28, 2024

Submissions

- All requirements should be completed and submitted to PassageUMC.
- If you have any questions, please contact:
The Office of Ministry, Ms. Susan Thomas, stthomas@wocumc.org or Rev. Donnetta Peaks, dpeaks@wocumc.org.

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 (§324.4)

- High School Education
- Bachelor's Degree from University Senate approved college or university
- Masters 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
- Completion of Formation Event
- 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
- Completion of Formation Event
- Provisional Membership (2 year minimum full time)
- Full Membership and Ordination as Deacon

Transfer from Another 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 and attend West Ohio Boundary Training
- Education requirements approved by GBHEM
- Receive approval from the Available Personnel Committee (APC)

Transfer from Another Denomination (¶347.3)

- Ordained Clergy transfer for Provisional membership or Local Pastor verified by GBHEM
- Notarized Statement, Background Check, Psychological Report, Medical Report submitted and attend West Ohio Boundary Training
- 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

All clergy tracks require the West Ohio Conference Boundaries training. Training from other sources (e.g. seminary) does not qualify.

Lay Servant Ministries Overview *The Book of Discipline 2016 (¶ 266 - 269)*

<i>Title</i>	<i>Requirements</i>
<p><i>Local Church Lay Servant</i> Serve primarily in the local congregation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastor and charge conference approval • Complete the Basic Course in LSM • File annual report • Take a refresher course every 3 years
<p><i>Certified Lay Servant</i> Local Church Lay Servants who have taken an advanced course in LSM; serve in the local congregation and beyond</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastor and charge conference approval • Take an advanced course after the Basic Course • File annual report • Complete 1 advanced course every 3 years
<p><i>Lay Speaker</i> Certified Lay Servants who provide pulpit supply <i>Required Courses:</i> - <i>Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts</i> - <i>Leading Prayer</i> - <i>Preaching, Leading Worship</i> - <i>Living Our United Methodist Beliefs (UM Heritage)</i> - <i>Life Together in the United Methodist Connection (UM Polity)</i></p>	<p><i>(Are Certified Lay Servants)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastor and charge conference approval • Complete the required courses for lay speaker • Interview with District Committee on LSM • Approved by annual conference Committee on Lay Servant Ministries • File annual report • Every 3 years complete 1 advanced course and interview with District Committee on LSM
<p><i>Certified Lay Minister</i> Certified Lay Speaker or Servant who is assigned by the District Superintendent to a particular ministry within the district or annual conference</p>	<p><i>(Certified Lay Servant--recommended)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pastor and charge conference approval • DS approval • Apply to district Committee on Ordained Ministry • Complete required course work • Certified by Director of Connectional Ministries • Recertify every 2 years

Other Lay Ministry Opportunities

Deaconess (laywomen) / Home Missioner (laymen)

¶ 1913-1918

- 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

Steps To Becoming A Certified Lay Minister (CLM)

Date Completed:

- _____ Contact the pastor of your church.
- _____ Complete the Certified Lay Ministry Academy application. This requires the signature of your District Superintendent, pastor, and your three reference letters. E-Mail to: Julie Carter, jcarter@wocumc.org.
- _____ Complete the Notarized Statement Background Check Form.
- _____ Request that your District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM) begin your certified lay ministry file, and ask when you should do an introduction interview. Schedule accordingly.
- _____ Read *Christian as Minister*. Discuss what you learned with your pastor.
- _____ Ask your pastor to schedule a time for the Church Council or Administrative Board to cast a vote regarding their affirmation of your call as a CLM.
- _____ Plan to complete the Lay Speaker Courses of Study. Due to the availability and timing of Lay Speaker training, candidates need only to verify its completion prior to being granted the final certification as CLM.
 - Local Church Lay Servant Basic Course
 - Certified Lay Servant Advanced Course
 - Lay Speaker Course of Study
 - Discovering You – Spiritual Gifts
 - Leading Prayer
 - Go Preach
 - Leading Worship
 - Living Out United Methodist Beliefs
 - Life Together in the United Methodist Church
- _____ Complete the Certified Lay Ministry Academy. A course of study is available at the West Ohio Conference or at westohioumc.org/clm . Write and submit a one page summary of your reflection and learning after each Academy session to your District Office that is marked for your Lay Ministry file.
- _____ If your pastor is unable to assist you in the process to become a CLM, request that your District Superintendent or DCOM provide you with a mentor. This assignment should be made in writing.

- _____ Complete appropriate training for the ministry context that you are called (e.g. rural chaplaincy, Christian education, spiritual formation, church business administration, counseling, etc.).
- _____ Provide a copy of the Certified Lay Ministry Academy Certificate of Completion to your District Office.
- _____ Submit your Mutual Ministry Plan to your District Office.
- _____ Send a letter to the Chair of the DCOM designated interview team requesting an interview for CLM certification.
- _____ Review your Ministry Candidate file to ensure that it is complete.
- _____ Attend Annual Conference for the day that the newly certified CLM's will be recognized.
- _____ Recertify bi-annually with your DCOM interview team.
- _____ Complete an Annual Report including the latest Mutual Ministry Plan to maintain certification.

Recertification

- Provide a copy of the latest Mutual Ministry Plan
- Provide evidence of a Ministry review by Church Council, Administrative Board, or Charge Conference where assigned.
- Provide evidence of participation in continuing education in the specialty area you've identified (Lay Servant Ministry Advanced Course(s) , Rural Chaplains Focus Events, Nursing Courses, Christian Education Events, etc.).

Certified Lay Minister Mutual Ministry Plan

Between _____ (CLM)

And _____ (Congregation) _____ (Date)

1. Local Church Description and Mission: (Brief)

2. Members of the Mutual Ministry Team (MMT)

Briefly describe this key group's role, when they meet and function of each on the team.

a) CLM Name

i. Name

ii. Responsibilities

b) Equipping Clergy (CLM pastor or DS assigned)

i. Name

ii. Responsibilities

c) District Superintendent

i. Name

ii. Responsibilities

d) Congregation Members (name/ro(e))

i. Name/role

ii. Name/role

iii. Name/role

iv. Name/role

e) Others as agreed

i. Name/role

ii. Name/role

3. Expectations of Certified Lay Minister

a) Duties clarified (ie. Teaching, leading worship, prison ministry, community health—)

b) Amount of time (expectations of service weekly, monthly...)

c) Learning Plan (accomplishing certification studies, recertification, additional training for specialty.)

d) Time away (vacation, training...)

e) Renewal (any provision for retreats, worship...)

4. Congregation's support of Certified Lay Ministry

a) Financial

- i. Compensation
- ii. Reimbursed Expenses
- iii. Benefits
- iv. Continuing Education costs

b) Development of CU,

- i. Supervision
- ii. Support
- iii. Accountability

5. Review Plan - How the congregation and CLM will assess this ministry annually for effectiveness.

(When, How, Who involved, What will be assessed, Plan for improvement, celebration)

6. Provision for Covenant Re-consideration

7. Clear steps to release/change the ministry covenant as necessary. it should include process for amending the covenant so it stays accurate and valid. This section should clearly list process for Covenant amendments or dissolution.

8. Closing Statement

9. End with promise of mutual support and encouragement This is a covenant before God made between partners in ministry.

Approval section:

This Covenant is supported and approved by the dCOM and Conference Leadership on this _____ day of _____ of the year _____ of our Lord Jesus Christ , as witnessed by the signatures below.

Signature of District Committee on Ministry Chair	Date
---	------

Signature of District Superintendent	Date
--------------------------------------	------

Signature of West Ohio Conference Director of Connectional Ministries	Date
---	------

Assignment

Certified Lay Minister is assigned to the following ministry: _____

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 for one full week in late June and again in mid-October.

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-Licensing School assignments are a critical part of LPLS.

LPLS expectations include:

- All participants are required to attend all sessions and be in residence during their allotted time (three days or 7 days)
- 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

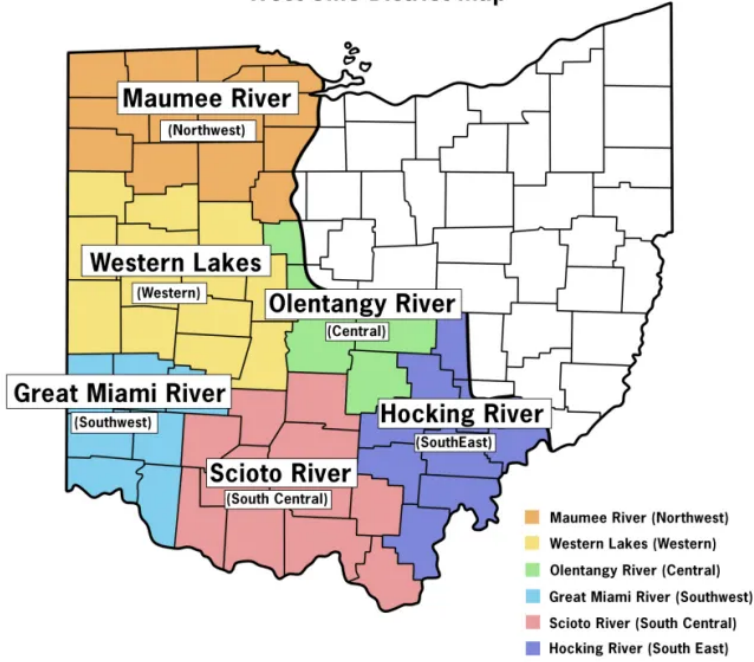
West Ohio's Licensing School has three goals: offer rich opportunities for spiritual formation, create an atmosphere where students develop their own pastoral identity and provide excellent teaching times so that students gain confidence and competence around essential ministry skills.

Topics covered by LPLS include:

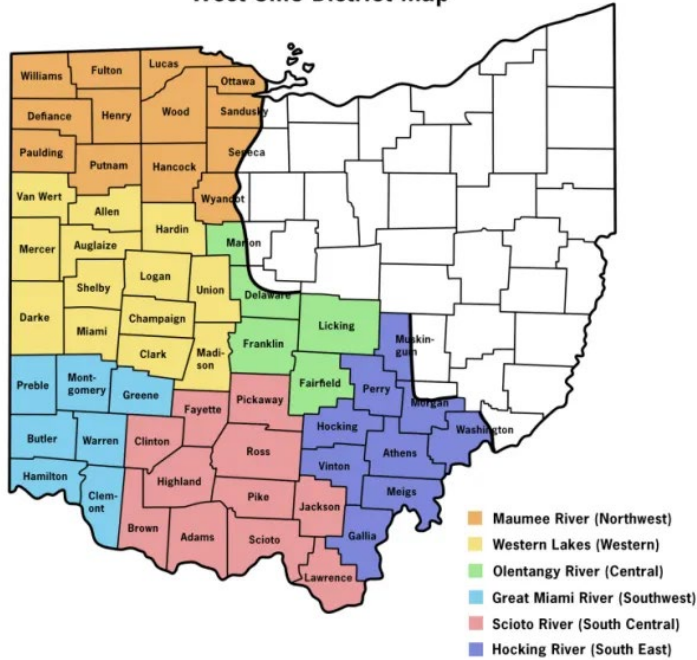
- Spiritual Formation
- Leadership (including vision and strategy)
- Worship
- Evangelism
- Weddings
- Mission
- Funerals
- Preaching
- Sacraments
- Church Administration
- UM Tradition
- Personal Finances
- Discipleship Pathways
- Stewardship
- Pastoral Care
- Healthy Boundaries Training
- Wellness

West Ohio Conference
District Maps, effective 7/1/2023

West Ohio District Map



West Ohio District Map



dCOM Interview Guidelines

Guidelines for preparing for an interview using PassageUMC.

- dCOM Chair/Registrar will make sure the necessary paperwork is turned in for the candidate file and uploaded into Pathways.
- Before any files are sent out via email from Pathways, all dCOM members will have a signed confidentiality agreement on file at the District Office.
- Around a week before each interview, candidate file links will be sent by dCOM Chair/Registrar to all dCOM members for their team interviews only.
- 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 in some districts, 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.
- Following the interview shred any printed pages and delete files from your computer within 48 hours.

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..
- 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 back 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.
- Per your district policy, invite the candidate to return to the waiting area.
- Interview teams will discern their recommendation to plenary and invite the candidate back for a preliminary decision. 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.
- A designated team member will accompany the candidate back from the interview room.
- Team members will complete the appropriate interview form, prepare for their plenary report and evaluate their team interactions.

District Committee Voting Percentages

	$\frac{3}{4}$ Majority vote	Simple majority
Commissioning Recommendation	•	
Initial Certification	•	
Initial License	•	
Renewal of Certification	•	
Renewal of License		•
COS extension beyond 8 years FT and 12 years PT	•	
Other matters of candidacy		•

Discipline References:

Recommendation from the district to the conference BOM - $\frac{3}{4}$ 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 $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote of the district committee on ordained ministry.”

Initial Certification - $\frac{3}{4}$ 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 $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote of the committee members present is required for certification.”

The Book of Discipline 2016 ¶666.7 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 $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote is required for certification. All other matters of candidacy shall be by a simple majority vote.”

Initial License - $\frac{3}{4}$ 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 $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote of the committee members present is required for Initial License.”

Time extension to complete the Course of Study - $\frac{3}{4}$ 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 $\frac{3}{4}$ 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, license renewal, & other district level candidacy matters - simple majority vote

The Book of Discipline 2016 ¶666.7 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 $\frac{3}{4}$ 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

CLM Initial/Renewal Certification Interview (¶271)

Requirements prior to interview

- See the Certified Lay Ministry Certification Application Process: www.westohioumc.org/conference/certified-lay-ministry

Required Questions

- How did the Certified Lay Ministry Academy 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 Certified Lay Academy?
- 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 the CLM Interview Form with Action Report, along with minutes to dCOM members, the district office and West Ohio Conference of Connectional Ministry: Attention Director of Discipleship Resources, including recommendation for the candidate.

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
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 sending the candidate to the Candidacy Summit. 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 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.

Initial Certification Interview (¶310.2)

Requirements prior to interview

1. Introductory Interview with District Superintendent and dCOM
2. Completion of the Candidacy Summit Process including psychological assessment
3. Submission of proof of high school graduation or equivalent
4. Medical Report on Form 103
5. Submittal of three sealed reference forms
6. PPRC approval (Form 102/minutes) and Charge Conference approval (Form 104/minutes) and written requirements as outlined on the Step by Step Guide (PPRC: see page 17, page 79 & page 115 CC: see page 17, page 80 & page 117)

Required Questions

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

- How did the Candidacy Summit 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 in the Candidacy Summit Process?
- 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. (see page 47)
- 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 Action Outline #1

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

Initial Licensing Interview (¶315)

Requirements prior to interview

1. Completion of the Candidacy Summit Process
2. Certification by dCOM (may happen in this same interview with a separate vote)
3. Completion of Local Pastor Licensing School
4. 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?

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 47*)
- 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

3/4 majority written ballot required for licensing

Remind new licensed local pastors what authority and restrictions come with license. **Direct them to Local Pastor FAQ** (page 119)

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.

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

Renewal of Certified Candidacy Interview (¶313)

Requirements prior to interview

1. Annual recommendation of the candidate's charge conference in file
2. Official transcript from the school, college, or seminary showing satisfactory progress
3. Provide a report as to whether a candidate's local church is providing spiritual and financial support. Form 117

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 47*)
- What does your support system look like?
- What are your plans for continued growth?

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?
- How has your call been shaped/challenged/affirmed
- 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?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- In what ways have your spiritual disciplines affected your practice of leadership in ministry?
- 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.

Renewal of Local Pastor License Interview (¶315)

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.
3. Provide a report as to whether a candidate's local church is providing spiritual and financial support. Form 117

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?
- Choose one Disciplinary question for theological articulation. (*see page 47*)
- 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 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

3/4 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

Recommendation for Associate Membership Interview (¶322)

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 of 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 of Arts or an equivalent 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?

Suggested Questions

- How has the Course of Study shaped your theology?
- Ask 2-4 of the Disciplinary Questions for theological articulation (see page 47)
- 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

$\frac{3}{4}$ majority written ballot required for recommendation

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; if paper file exists, transfer file to the Office of Ministry if the candidate is recommended.

Recommendation for Provisional Membership Interview (¶324)

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 24)
4. District superintendent evaluation in file

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?
- 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?
- Ask two-four of the Disciplinary questions for theological articulation (see page 47)

Suggested Questions

- How has seminary/Course of Study shaped your theology?
- Other questions that would integrate their theology with their practice of ministry.
- Other questions that make the connection between their seminary/COS education and their practice of ministry.

Action Required

$\frac{3}{4}$ majority written ballot required for recommendation

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. 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) Explain your understanding of the distinctive vocations of the Order of Elders and the Order of Deacons. How do you perceive yourself, your gifts, your motives, your role, and your commitment as a Provisional Deacon or Provisional Elder 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 a person's call & 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 whereby 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 Provisional Membership

- Determination of readiness for commissioning to Provisional 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 provisional 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, SPRC 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, notarized statement, and healthy boundaries training

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.

West Ohio Conference Interview Form for Certified Lay Minister (CLM) Interview

Candidate Name _____ Date: _____

Church Serving: _____ District: _____

Action Report:

- Recommending Certification by West Ohio Conference Director of Connectional Ministries
- Not Recommending Certification by West Ohio Conference Director of Connectional Ministries

Signature of District Board on Ordained Ministry Chair

Date

Concerns _____

Interview Summary Paragraph: _____

Team Members:

Follow-up from Interview:

Required Questions

- How did the Certified Lay Ministry Academy 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 West Ohio 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

West Ohio Conference Form for Certified Lay Minister

Requirements for Certification Renewal

Personal Information

Candidate's Name: _____ Male Female

(as it will appear on certificate)

Ethnicity: African American Asian/Pacific Islander Caucasian/European
 Multi Cultural/Global Native American Spanish/Hispanic/Latino

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Primary Phone _____ Home Work Cell E-mail _____

District Great Miami River Hocking River Maumee River Olentangy River
 Scioto River Western Lakes

Name of Church _____

Church Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Church Phone: _____ Pastor Name: _____

Certified Lay Minister Requirements

Initial Certification Date Issued: _____

Last Certification Renewal Date Issued: _____

Continuing Education:

Advanced Lay Ministry Course(s) completed within the last two years supporting mutual ministry plan

Course Title: _____ Completion Date: _____

Course Title: _____ Completion Date: _____

Additional Training(s)

Course Title: _____ Completion Date: _____

Course Title: _____ Completion Date: _____

Interview with District Committee on Ordained Ministries Interview Date: _____

West Ohio Conference Form for Certified Lay Minister

Requirements for Certification Renewal

Signatures

Candidate Signature: _____ Date: _____

District Chair on Ordained Ministry Signature: _____ Date: _____

Submit

- Completed Form
- Updated Mutual Ministry Plan

E-Mail to: Mrs. Kathy Moore , Certified Lay Ministry Coordinator
kathymoore@wocumc.org

Phone: 513-288-3391

West Ohio Conference Committee on Servant Lay Ministries Office Only

Date Received: _____ Date Reviewed: _____

Certification renewal approved as a Certified Lay Minister by the West Ohio Conference Director of Connectional Ministries:

Yes No

Comments: _____

_____ Certificate Issued Date: _____

West Ohio Conference Director of Connectional Ministries Signature:

Lay Servant Ministries

Initial Application or Request for Renewal To the Charge Conference



Date _____ Year _____

Lay Servant Contact Information

Name Mrs. Ms. Mr. _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Primary Phone _____ Home Work Cell E-mail _____

District Great Miami River Hocking River Maumee River Olentangy River
 Scioto River Western Lakes

Name of Church _____

Church Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Church Phone: _____ Pastor Name: _____

Initial Application

Request of Lay Servant to begin as a: Certified Lay Servant Lay Speaker Certified Lay Minister

Date _____ Candidate Signature _____

I recommend concurrence with the Request of Lay Servant.

Date _____ Pastor Signature _____

The charge conference of _____ (church/charge) recommends the concurrence with the Request of the Lay Servant in the ensuing year.

Date _____ District Superintendent Signature _____

Request for Renewal

Request of Lay Servant to renew certification as a: Certified Lay Servant Lay Speaker Certified Lay Minister

Date _____ Candidate Signature _____

The charge conference of _____ (church/charge) recommends the concurrence with the Lay Servant's Request for Renewal in the ensuing year.

Date _____ District Superintendent Signature _____

After this form is completed and signed by those listed above, the Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference is requested to reproduce THREE copies: (1) Lay Servant, (2) District Committee on Lay Servant Ministries and/or District Committee on Ordained Ministry of all Certified Lay Ministers, (3) District Superintendent. The Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference keeps the ORIGINAL.

Lay Servant Ministries

Initial Application or Request for Renewal To the Charge Conference



Date _____ Year _____

Lay Servant Contact Information

Name Mrs. Ms. Mr. _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Primary Phone _____ Home Work Cell E-mail _____

District Great Miami River Hocking River Maumee River Olentangy River
 Scioto River Western Lakes

Name of Church _____

Church Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Church Phone: _____ Pastor Name: _____

Initial Application

Request of Lay Servant to begin as a: Certified Lay Servant Lay Speaker Certified Lay Minister

Date _____ Candidate Signature _____

I recommend concurrence with the Request of Lay Servant.

Date _____ Pastor Signature _____

The charge conference of _____ (church/charge) recommends the concurrence with the Request of the Lay Servant in the ensuing year.

Date _____ District Superintendent Signature _____

Request for Renewal

Request of Lay Servant to renew certification as a: Certified Lay Servant Lay Speaker Certified Lay Minister

Date _____ Candidate Signature _____

The charge conference of _____ (church/charge) recommends the concurrence with the Lay Servant's Request for Renewal in the ensuing year.

Date _____ District Superintendent Signature _____

After this form is completed and signed by those listed above, the Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference is requested to reproduce THREE copies: (1) Lay Servant, (2) District Committee on Lay Servant Ministries and/or District Committee on Ordained Ministry of all Certified Lay Ministers, (3) District Superintendent. The Recording Secretary of the Charge Conference keeps the ORIGINAL.

West Ohio 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

Action Report:

- Enrollment in Candidacy Summit Process affirmed (*no formal vote required*)
- Enrollment in Candidacy Summit Process not affirmed

Vote Count: _____ Yes _____ No _____ Abstain

Interview Summary Paragraph: _____

Team Members:

Follow-up from Interview:

(continue on back)

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

West Ohio 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: _____

(continue on back)

Required Questions

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

- How did the Candidacy Summit Process affirm that your call is to credentialing/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?

Strengths:

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments

West Ohio 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

Action Report: (Individual written ballot required)

- Licensing request affirmed (*simple majority required*)
- Licensing 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:

(continue on back)

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?

Strengths:

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments

West Ohio 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

Action Report: (Individual written ballot required)

Certification request affirmed (3/4 majority required)

Certification request not affirmed

Vote Count: _____ Yes _____ No _____ Abstain

License request affirmed (3/4 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:

(continue on back)

Required Questions

For Required and Suggested questions, please refer to the interview forms for Initial Certification and Initial Licensing interviews.

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments

West Ohio Conference Interview Form for Renewal of Certified Candidacy 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

Action Report: (Individual written ballot required)

- Renewal of Certification affirmed (3/4 majority required)
- Renewal of Certification not affirmed = Discontinuance of Candidacy (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:

(continue on back)

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 47)

- What does your support system look like?

- What are your plans for continued growth?

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments

West Ohio 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

Action Report: (Individual written ballot required)

- Renewal of License request affirmed (3/4 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:

(continue on back)

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?

- Choose one Disciplinary question for theological articulation. (see page 47)

- What does your support system look like?

- What are your plans for continued growth?

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments

West Ohio 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 service as local pastor

How has this been fulfilled? _____

Age Requirement: Reached age 40 by date of credentialing. Date of Birth: _____

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:

(continue on back)

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?

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments

West Ohio Conference Interview Form for Recommendation for Provisional Membership Interview- Elder

Candidate Name _____ Date: _____

Church Serving: _____ District: _____

Educational Status: Year Seminary Completed: _____
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: _____

(continue on back)

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?
- Ask 2-4 of the Disciplinary questions for theological articulation (see page 47)

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments

West Ohio 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: _____ Completed Formation Event? Yes No

- 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. Refer to Tracks for Licensing and Ordination)

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:

(continue on back)

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?
- 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?
- Ask 2-4 of the Disciplinary questions for theological articulation (see page 47)

Strengths

Growing Edges:

Notes from Other Questions and Responses/ Comments

PPRC Facilitator Interview Report

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

On _____ (date) I, _____ (name of dCOM facilitator) from the _____ (name of district) dCOM met with the PPRC 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 PPRC to become a Certified Candidate for ministry in the United Methodist Church.

The vote of the PPRC was:

_____ (number of Yes)

_____ (number of No)

_____ (number of Abstain)

The vote was by written ballot.

Signature of dCOM Facilitator

Signature of PPRC Secretary

**Please have dCOM facilitator return the completed form and meeting minutes to the District Office.*

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 ¶1310.1d)

- (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 _____

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 West Ohio 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.

<i>Required Area of Study</i>	<i>Name of Course/Date</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Hours</i>
Old Testament			
New Testament			
Theology			
Church History			
Mission of the Church In the World			
Evangelism			
Worship/Liturgy			
United Methodist Doctrine			
United Methodist Polity			
United Methodist History			
Total Hours			

Candidate Name _____ Date: _____

District Committee on Ordained Ministry Approval Report for Certified Candidate for Ordained/Licensed Ministry Form #113

Candidate Name _____

Address (School) _____

Street

City

State

Zip

Address (Permanent) _____

Street

City

State

Zip

Email: _____

Charge Conference _____

District _____

Annual Conference _____

Candidacy Mentor (s) _____

The candidate has completed *The Christian as Minister* and the first two chapters of the *Candidacy Guidebook* with their candidacy mentoring group.

Name of District Superintendent _____

Date received affirmative vote from Charge Conference or equivalent body _____

Date met the district Committee on Ordained Ministry _____

Received Certification as a Candidate for:

Order of Deacons Order of Elders License as Local Pastor

Certification Delayed Certification Denied

During the candidacy studies the inquiring candidate decided not to continue a process toward ordained ministry as a vocation.

A certified candidate must complete a minimum of 1 year, maximum 12 years as certified candidate prior to probationary membership.

Signature of district Committee on Ministry, Chair

Date

Ordained Ministry Progress Assessment

(optional – offered by the Western Lakes District)

Name	Date Candidacy Began	Date Certified	Goal
	<i>Date/Comments</i>	<i>Date/Comments</i>	<i>Date/Comments</i>
1. Articulation of call a. Articulation of gifts for ministry b. Articulation of grace for ministry			
2. Articulation of sacraments			
3. Practice of ministry			
4. Articulation of call regarding goal — Why Elder? Why Deacon? Why Local Pastor?			
5. Articulation of Theology a. Jesus is Lord b. Salvation c. Kingdom of God			

	<i>Date/Comments</i>	<i>Date/Comments</i>	<i>Date/Comments</i>
<p>6. Understanding of United Methodist Church</p> <p>What does it mean “to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world?”</p>			
<p>7. Does the candidate understand the “core process for WOC” and show fruit for transformation?</p> <p>Passionate worship</p> <p>Faith forming relationships</p> <p>Radical hospitality</p> <p>Risk-taking mission</p> <p>Extravagant generosity</p>			
<p>8. Commitment to Itineracy</p>			
<p>9. Self-care/ self-awareness</p> <p>a. Health</p> <p>b. Family</p> <p>c. Devotion Life</p> <p>d. Sets appropriate boundaries</p>			
<p>10. Comments</p>			

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 (§111, ¶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 United Methodist Women 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. Discipleship Ministries
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.gcsrw.org*
11. General Commission on United Methodist Men
www.gcummm.org
12. General Council on Finance and Administration (GCFA)
www.gcfa.org
13. United Methodist Publishing House
www.umph.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).

Online Candidacy Application System (OCAS)

The online system managed by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to track candidates for licensed or ordained ministry. District superintendents invite candidates to enroll in the system after they have written to request admission to candidacy (§ 310.1).

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 (§1312).

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 (§1339).

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).

Vocation¹

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.

General Board of Higher Education & Ministry Division of Ordained Ministry A United Methodist Glossary of Candidacy Terms
The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016. Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016.

¹ " vocation definition | Dictionary.com ." Dictionary.com. <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/vocation> (accessed March 5, 2013).

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, 605.6, 635.2g, 665.9, 2008 *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 (1 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.

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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. E-mail the Rev. Meg Lassiatt, Director of Candidacy, Mentoring, and Conference Relations for the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry at mlassiat@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)
- Divorce or Infidelity (p. 5)
- Family Violence (p. 6)
- Legal (General) (p. 7)
- Legal (Sex-Related Crimes) (p. 8)
- Mental Illness (p. 9)
- Personal Finances (p. 10)
- Physical Health (p. 11)
- Pornography (p. 12)
- Sexual Misconduct (p. 13)
- Addendum: Definitions of Improper Sexual Contact (p. 14)

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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 **C**ut down on your drinking?
 - Have people **A**nnoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
 - Have you ever felt bad or **G**uilty about your drinking?
 - Have you ever had a drink first thing in the morning to steady your nerves or get rid of a hangover (**E**ye-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.

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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.

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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 relationship 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.

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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.

Behavioral Health Guidelines for Boards of Ordained Ministry

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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.

Behavioral Health Guidelines for Boards of Ordained Ministry

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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.

Behavioral Health Guidelines for Boards of Ordained Ministry

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Category: Mental Illness

Standard:

The candidate has no current or recurring disqualifying psychological impairment.

Critical behaviors:

- The candidate has received a diagnosis of bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or any other psychotic disorder.
- 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 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?
- 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.

Behavioral Health Guidelines for Boards of Ordained Ministry

Division of Ordained Ministry
General Board of Higher Education & Ministry
www.gbhem.org/bom



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. Difficulties in this area 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)?
- Note: Business failures and unemployment are not necessarily mitigating conditions, but require further exploration.

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.

Behavioral Health Guidelines for Boards of Ordained Ministry

Division of Ordained Ministry
General Board of Higher Education & Ministry
www.gbhem.org/bom



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):

- Morbid obesity (body weight 100 lbs or more above maximum ideal weight).
- Markedly underweight (body weight at least 15% or more below the candidate's healthy minimum weight).
- 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.

Behavioral Health Guidelines for Boards of Ordained Ministry

Division of Ordained Ministry
General Board of Higher Education & Ministry
www.gbhem.org/bom



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:

- *The Porn Trap: The Essential Guide to Overcoming Problems Caused by Pornography* – Wendy and Larry Maltz. Harper Paperbacks, (2008).
- *In the Shadows of the Net: Breaking Free from Compulsive Online Sexual Behavior* – Patrick Carnes, et. Al. Hazelden Publishing, (2007).
- *The Pornography Trap: Setting Pastors and Layperson Free from Sexual Addiction* – Ralph Earle & Mark Laaser. Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, (2002).
- Christian Century (Sept. 4, 2007), “Addictive Behavior: Pastors and Pornography”.
- Psychotherapy Networker (Dec. 1, 2009), “Out of the Shadow”.

Websites for support:

- www.clergyrecovery.com
- www.netaddiction.com
- www.helpguide.org
- www.healthysex.com

Behavioral Health Guidelines for Boards of Ordained Ministry

Division of Ordained Ministry
General Board of Higher Education & Ministry
www.gbhem.org/bom



Category: Sexual Misconduct

Standard:

The candidate has no history, or complaints, of sexual misconduct or charges of sexual harassment having been brought against him/her. See addendum for definitions.

Rationale:

Candidates must model in their personal lives and behavior a healthy and sacred view of sexuality so as not to misuse the clerical office.

Critical Behaviors:

- A history of complaints or charges (either formal or informal) of sexual harassment.
- A history of improper sexual conduct.

Exploratory Questions:

- Have you ever had a complaint or charge (either formal or informal) of sexual harassment or misconduct brought against you? If so, describe the circumstances.
- What steps have you taken to insure that the behavior does not occur in the future?

Recommendation:

- The Board of Ministry should explore in an interview with the committee 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.

Behavioral Health Guidelines for Boards of Ordained Ministry

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ADDENDUM: Definitions of Improper Sexual Conduct

Deviant sexual behaviors:

Deviant sexual behaviors include, but are not limited to, behaviors such as pedophilia, exhibitionism, or other paraphilias, and preoccupation with pornographic materials for sexual stimulation and gratification.

Sexual harassment:

Includes solicitation, physical advances, or verbal or nonverbal conduct consisting of a single intense or severe act, or of multiple persistent or pervasive acts, by a candidate toward another individual, that are sexual in nature and occur whether in connection with the candidate's clerical activities or personal life, and that are unwelcome, offensive, or create a hostile environment for the affected individual.

Sexual impropriety:

Sexual impropriety is deliberate or repeated comments, gestures, or physical acts of a sexual nature that include but are not limited to:

- Behavior, gestures or expressions which may reasonably be interpreted as inappropriately seductive or sexually demeaning.
- Making inappropriate comments about an individual's body.
- Making sexually demeaning comments to an individual.
- Making comments about an individual's potential sexual performance.
- In a counseling relationship, requesting details of a person's sexual history when not clinically indicated for the type of consultation.
- Requesting a date.
- Initiating conversation regarding the sexual problems, preferences, or fantasies of either party.
- Kissing of a sexual nature.
- Sharing or displaying pornographic material with another person.

Course of Study Classes

<i>FOCUS</i>	<i>Year One: Foundation</i>	<i>Year Two</i>	<i>Year Three</i>	<i>Year Four</i>	<i>Year Five: Integrative</i>
<i>Bible</i>	121 Bible I: Introduction	221 Bible II: Torah & Israel's History	321 Bible III: Gospels	421 Bible IV: Prophets, Psalms & Wisdom Lit	521 Bible V: Acts, Epistles & Revelation
<i>Theology</i>	122 Theological Heritage I: Introduction	222 Theological Heritage II: Early Church	322 Theological Heritage III: Medieval- Reformation	422 Theological Heritage IV: Wesleyan Movement	522 Theology in the Contemporary Church
<i>Congregational Life</i>	123 Formation & Discipleship	223 Worship & Sacraments	323 Congregational Care	423 Mission	532 Evangelism
<i>Pastoral Identity</i>	124 Transformative Leadership	224 Administration & Polity	324 Preaching	424 Ethics	524 Theological Reflection: Practive of Ministry

In the General Conference Session of 2016 it was approved that local pastors can now fulfill the requirements for Course of Study as part of a bachelor's degree taken at a United Methodist-related college or university.

Course of Study Regional Schools

*Please visit the Regional COS School website for information regarding COS Satellite or COS Hybrid locations.
<https://www.gbhem.org/clergy/course-of-study-schools/>

NORTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION COS SCHOOLS

COS School of Ohio

Methodist Theological School in Ohio

3081 Columbus Pike
Delaware, OH 43015

Director: Dr. Joon-Sik Park
Phone: 740/362-3367
Email: jpark@mtso.edu

Contact Name: Terri Litchfield, COS Coordinator
Phone: 740/362-3120
Contact Email: tlitchfield@mtso.edu
Website: www.cosohio.org

Garrett COS

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

2121 Sheridan Rd.
Evanston, IL 60201

Director: Dr. Tercio Junker
Phone: 847/866-3942
Email: tercio.junker@garrett.edu

Contact Name: Jacqueline Azpeitia
Phone: 847/866-3942, 847/866-3942
Email: jacqueline.azpeitia@garrett.edu;
cos@garrett.edu
Website: <https://www.garrett.edu/COS>

NORTHEASTERN JURISDICTION COS SCHOOL

Wesley COS*

Wesley Theological Seminary

4500 Massachusetts Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20016

Co-Director: Dr. F. Douglas Powe, Jr
Phone: 202/885-8688
Email: dpowe@wesleyseminary.edu

Co-Director: Sara Sheppard
Phone: 202/885-8688
Email: ssheppard@wesleyseminary.edu

Website: <http://www.wesleyseminary.edu/courseof-study-current-students/>

SOUTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION COS SCHOOLS

Perkins COS*

Perkins School of Theology-SMU

5915 Bishop Blvd.
PO Box 750133
Dallas, TX 75275-0133

Director: Dr. Paul Barton
Phone: 214/768-2768
Email: pbarton@mail.smu.edu

Saint Paul COS*

Saint Paul School of Theology

4370 W 109th St., Suite 300
Overland Park, KS 66211

Director: Dr. Israel Kamudzandu
Phone: 913/253-5016
Email: israelk@spst.edu

Contact Name: Tiana Gatewood
Phone: 913/253-5023
Email: tiana.gatewood@spst.edu
Website: <http://www.spst.edu/COS>

SOUTHEASTERN JURISDICTION COS SCHOOLS

Duke COS

Duke Divinity School

312 Blackwell St
Suite 101
Durham, NC 27701

Director: Dr. Lacey Warner
Phone: 919/613-5326, 919/613-5323
Email: lwarner@div.duke.edu

Associate Director: Olivia Stella
Phone: 919/613-5326
Email: olivia.stella@duke.edu;
events@div.duke.edu
Website: www.divinity.duke.edu/cos

Emory COS*

Candler School of Theology

1531 Dickey Dr.

Atlanta, GA 30322

Director: Rev. Dr. Anne Burkholder

Phone: 404/727-1351

Email: anne.burkholder@emory.edu

Assistant Director: Amy Walker

Phone: 404/727-4587

Email: awalke8@emory.edu

Website:

<http://www.candler.emory.edu/programs/cos/>

Western Jurisdiction COS

1325 N. College Ave.

Claremont, CA 91711

Director: Faith Conklin

Phone: 909/447-2573

Email: faithconklin3@gmail.com

Contact Name: Judith Little

Phone: 909/447-6338

Email: jlittle@cst.edu

Website: <http://westernjurisdictionumc.org/wjevents/course-of-study>



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 clergy person 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*.



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 assist 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*.



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General Board of Higher Education and Ministry
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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 (¶1343) 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" (¶1333). 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.



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

First Steps – Elder

- Read and discuss *The Christian as Minister* with a clergy person 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*.



Ministry of **ENDORSED CLERGY**

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.



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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 (¶1331.4; ¶1337.3; ¶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.

(PPRC) Pastor-Parish Relations Committee Interview of Candidate for Ministry

(Facilitated by dCOM Representative)

- A. Introduce yourself, or have the pastor introduce you, to the PPRC.
- 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 PPRC 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 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 PPRC 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, PPRC Chair, dCOM Chair, dCOM Registrar and the Office of Ministry written 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 to another room, so that the PPRC 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. 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 PPRC interview. Send Form #102 and the minutes to the District Office.
- G. After the appropriate concluding remarks about the candidate or the process, thank the PPRC, the candidate and the pastor 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.

Charge/Church Conference Interview of a Candidate for Ministry

To: Members of the Charge/Church Conference

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 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)

- (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;

Charge Conference Interview

(Form 104 should be used to record the decision of the Charge/Church Conference.)

1. Explain the process and what this means to the candidate. (The Charge/Church Conference is either recommending or not recommending the candidate to the district Committee on Ordained Ministry for consideration as a certified candidate for ministry. (¶310.1e *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church, 2016*)
2. Determine that someone will take minutes, especially to record the vote using Form 104.
3. Open with prayer
4. Chair of the PPRC should report the result of the PPRC meeting with the candidate.
5. *The Book of Discipline* questions ¶310.1d (Wesley's historic questions) and *The Book of Discipline* ¶301.2a (i-vi) may be handed out to the members of the Charge Conference. This is meant to help guide the dialogue with the candidate. Adequate time for dialogue with the candidate should be allowed.
6. When conversation is complete, the candidate should be excused while the vote is taken.
7. With candidate out of the room, the facilitator should instruct the charge conference members in the voting process. A helpful question for committee members to ask themselves as they consider their vote is, "Would I want this person as my minister?"
8. A time for silent prayer may be offered before members record their votes.
9. Vote is to be taken by *written* ballot. *A 3/4 majority vote is needed for recommendation.* (*The Book of Discipline* ¶310.1e)
10. A person designated by the facilitator should collect and tally the votes.
11. The candidate is called back and the vote announced.
12. The facilitator should thank those who came to the Charge/Church Conference and conclude the meeting with prayer.
13. The Presiding Elder should complete Form #104 and return both the form and minutes to the district Committee on Ordained Ministry.

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? (paragraph 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 Local Pastors’ Licensing School;
3. They have been approved by the Annual Conference (recommended by $\frac{3}{4}$ 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: One may be a certified candidate for twelve years; each year the District Committee on Ordained Ministry re-certifies and relicenses each person after the person has demonstrated “progress” in education and professional growth. *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 Ohio. Such participation would be understood as an extension of the ministry of the church where you are appointed minister.

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!)

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 your church as soon as you have a license and have registered with the Secretary of the State of Ohio. If you officiate a marriage ceremony before you are properly registered with the state, the folks are not married in the eyes of the state.

Ministers who perform marriages without the state's permission are in violation of the state laws.

To register: Secretary of State, 30 East Broad Street- 14th Floor, Columbus, OH 43215

Phone: 614-466-4980 (Ask for the Elections Office)

Web: www.state.oh.us/sos

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 West Ohio Conference at 1-800-437-0028/ 614-844-6200. Ask to speak to Grace Welch, Pension Officer.

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 local pastors are required to earn 4 Continuing Education Units (1 C.E.U. equal 10 contact hours) per year, and report them to their Charge Conference. Part-time local pastors must do continuing education in proportions to their "timeness," i.e. half time= 2 C.E.U. Provisional members are in their Crucible or provisional 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. Contact the Office of Ministry (1-800-437-0028/614-844-6200) if you need additional financial assistance.

17. *Question: If I need pastoral care or counseling and feel alone, are there resources for me?*

Answer: Yes. Contact Ohio Health for our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or reach out to your District Superintendent for support.

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.

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.

Note: In the West Ohio Conference, all persons seeking a license for pastoral ministry must successfully complete the local pastors' certification school.



Passage | UMC



Quick Reference Guide

Updated July 2023



West Ohio Conference

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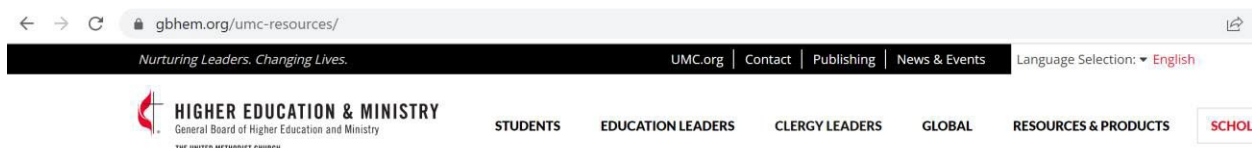
DCOM Passage UMC Instructions for Committee Members8

Access to Candidate Files:

Passage UMC: online
candidate files.

<https://www.gbhem.org/umc-resources/>

If you need overview of your steps, please go to dcom and BOM members training and review their steps. For questions, please reach out to Mrs. Susan Thomas, sthomas@wocumc.org.



UMC Resources



Passage UMC Resources

[Navigating Passage\[UMC\] \(for all users\)](#)

[District Superintendents & District Administrators Training](#)

[dCOM and BOM members Training](#)

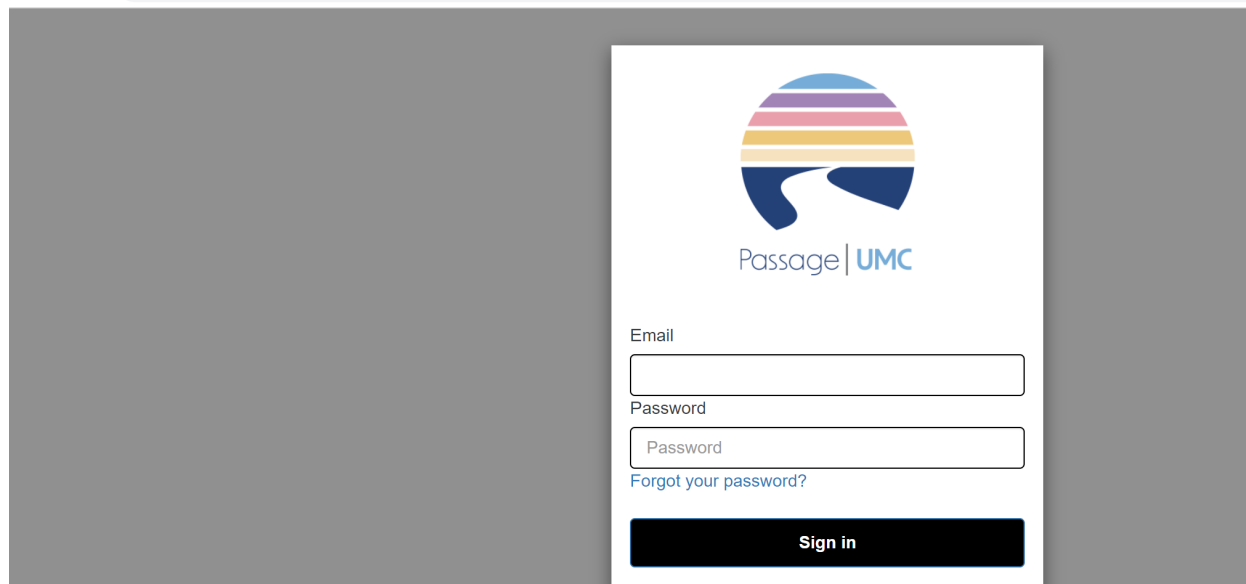
[BOM FAQ](#)

[Passage UMC Tech Updates](#)

HELPFUL TIPS/STEPS for Passage: www.passageumc.org

1. Log on with your Email and Password.

→ → ↻ gbhem-passage-umc.auth.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/login?client_id=1/6nr9n8k/a0l/j2gn0t2atobg&redirect_uri=https://passageumc.org/ap



Passage | UMC

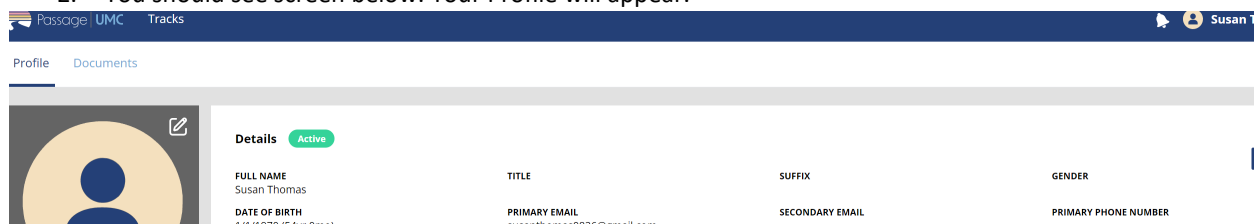
Email

Password

[Forgot your password?](#)

Sign in

2. You should see screen below: Your Profile will appear.



Passage UMC Tracks Susan T

Profile Documents

Details Active

FULL NAME	TITLE	SUFFIX	GENDER
Susan Thomas			
DATE OF BIRTH	PRIMARY EMAIL	SECONDARY EMAIL	PRIMARY PHONE NUMBER
1/1/1975 (E.S.P. 2001)	susan.thomas@passageumc.org		

3. Click on Tracks on top of the screen.

Track Templates (0)

Assignments (179)

- 2023 Provisional Elder Membership Request** →
 - Advisor
 - District Superintendent
- 2023 Associate Membership Requests** →
 - Advisor
 - District Superintendent
- 2023 Full Elder Membership Request** →
 - Advisor
 - District Superintendent
- 2023 Provisional Deacon Membership Request** →
 - Advisor
 - District Superintendent
- Candidacy Undecided** →
 - Advisor
 - District Superintendent
- Elder** →
 - District Superintendent

4. Click on one of 2023 Tracks. You will see your candidate(S).
 For Example: 2023 Full Deacon Membership Request


2023 Full Deacon Membership Request
 WEST OHIO

Quick search...

TRACK	STATUS	FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	EMAIL	ADVISORS	INTERVIEWERS
View	Open	Susan	Thomas	stomas@wocumc.org	Susan Thomas	
View	Open	Hannah	VanMeter	hannahvanmeter@powellumc.org	Susan Thomas	Robbie Scott , Linda Troy , Calvin Alston , Deborah Widdowson , Yijoon Chang , Susan Thomas , Robbie Scott , Linda Troy , Calvin Alston , Deborah Widdowson , Yijoon Chang , Susan Thomas
View	Open	Angela	Schroeder	angschr@gmail.com	Susan Thomas	Jean Schafer , Susan Thomas , James Souders , Lori Reiber , Seeyong Lee , Don Wilson

5. Click on “first” or “last” name of your candidate.

Profile Documents



Details Active

FULL NAME Hannah Starnes VanMeter	TITLE Ms	SUFFIX
DATE OF BIRTH 2/28/1993 (29yr 10mo)	PRIMARY EMAIL hannahvanmeter@powellumc.org	SECONDARY EMAIL
SECONDARY PHONE NUMBER	ROLES User, Participant	PRIMARY LANGUAGE English
UMC ID 73576	GCFA ID	ADDRESS 4129 Wayne Street Hilliard, OH 43026

Locations

Conference WEST OHIO (primary)	District CAPITOL AREA NORTH (primary)
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Church Memberships

Please contact an admin to add a church membership to your profile.

Tracks

- 2023 Full Deacon Membership Request** Open
Enrolled on 10/4/2022 at 2:04:29 PM
- Candidacy Summit Track** Open
Enrolled on 11/19/2020 at 8:56:19 AM
- 2021 Provisional Deacon Membership Request** Open
Requirements for Provisional Membership and Commissioning
Enrolled on 11/28/2020 at 12:28:03 PM

All the tracks of that candidate are listed. Go to that track or click on “documents” on top. But **not** all the documents will be uploaded. Only documents that the candidate uploaded will appear under the “documents.”

- Below is 2024 Full Deacon Membership Request Track.

2023 Full Deacon Membership Request

WEST OHIO



Hannah VanMeter

2023 Full Deacon Membership Request [Open](#)

1. 2023 Full Deacon Requests



READY

Full Membership Memo



COMPLETED

Requirements for Full Deacon Membership



COMPLETED

Full Membership Application



COMPLETED

Undergraduate and Graduate Transcript(s) - Non Sem



COMPLETED

Seminary Transcripts



COMPLETED

Medical Report



COMPLETED

Book of Discipline, Theological Questions



COMPLETED

Sermon Manuscript



COMPLETED

Sermon Video Link



Go to the step that you want to see. For example: Sermon Manuscript. Click on the file and open. **PLEASE DO NOT CLICK UNSUBMIT.**

Passage | UMC Tracks

< Track **Sermon Manuscript** Completed
2023 Full Deacon Membership Request

Sermon Manuscript
2023 Full Deacon Membership Request

Content
Complete or review each of the content items listed below.

Sermon Manuscript
Sermon Manuscript

Upload anything

[Browse Files](#)

or drag and drop to upload

Any file type

[Hannah VanMeter_Sermon_2022.docx \(1\).pdf](#)

Submitted 11/23/2022, 09:46 PM

[Unsubmit](#)

After you're done with file. Click on "Track" on top and it will go to previous steps.



West Ohio Conference

DCOM PASSAGES INSTRUCTIONS FOR DCOM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Passages is a completely new way of viewing files for DCOM. You will no longer get an email before each interview day with file links. As the Registrar, I will “assign” you as an “interviewer” to all those you will be interviewing, giving you access to their files. Prior to each interview day, you will receive the agenda which will have the list of who you are assigned to interview.

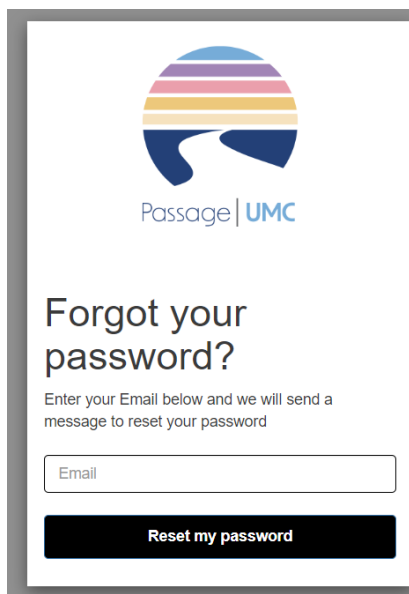
It will be your responsibility to log in to Passages and review the files for the person (people) you will be interviewing.

Here is how to access those files:

1. Go to passageumc.org

The screenshot shows the login interface for Passages | UMC. At the top is the logo, which consists of a stylized sun with horizontal stripes in blue, purple, pink, yellow, and orange, above a blue shape that resembles a person's profile. Below the logo is the text 'Passage | UMC'. Underneath is the 'Email' label and a text input field containing 'name@host.com'. Below that is the 'Password' label and a text input field containing 'Password'. A blue link labeled 'Forgot your password?' is positioned below the password field. At the bottom of the form is a black button with the text 'Sign in' in white.

2. If this is your first time, you will need to click “forgot your password?”



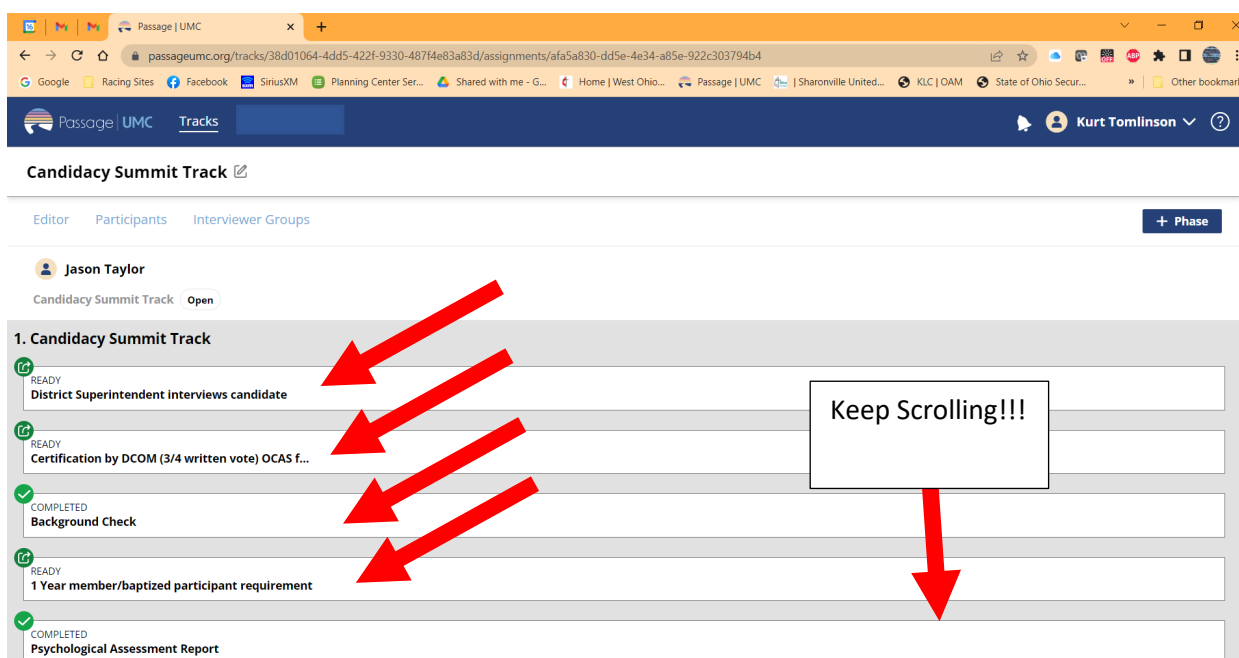
Passage | UMC

Forgot your password?

Enter your Email below and we will send a message to reset your password

Reset my password

3. Enter your email and click “Reset my password”.
4. The system will send you an email to the email on record. Follow the instructions to reset your password. If you don’t get an email, send Kurt an email at pastor@sharonvilleumc.org with the email you want on your passages record and he can change it.
5. Go back to the login screen (Step 1)
6. Login with your name and new password
7. When you log in again, you should see the tracks of the person you are interviewing. (not shown) Please click on each track to review the entire file.
8. In each track there are steps. Click on each step to look at the files.



Passage | UMC Tracks Kurt Tomlinson

Candidacy Summit Track

Editor Participants Interviewer Groups + Phase

Jason Taylor
Candidacy Summit Track Open

1. Candidacy Summit Track

- READY District Superintendent interviews candidate
- READY Certification by DCOM (3/4 written vote) OCAS f...
- COMPLETED Background Check
- READY 1 Year member/baptized participant requirement
- COMPLETED Psychological Assessment Report

Keep Scrolling!!!

9. In each of the steps, you will find files to open and read. Some steps will have one file, others will have 5 or more.

The screenshot displays a web browser window with the URL `passageumc.org/step/a4357be6-2afb-44e0-9226-c9fc9e75083a`. The page title is "Background Check" and it is marked as "Completed". The main content area is titled "Background Check Upload" and contains a "Background Check" section. Below this, there is a "Browse Files" button and a dashed box for file upload. A red arrow points to a file named "TAYLOR | BACK.pdf" listed below the upload area. The page also features a navigation bar with "Passage | UMC", "Tracks", "Users", and "Admin" options, and a user profile for "Kurt Tomlinson".

10. Enjoy your reading!



Thank you for your participation. For feedback, or questions, please reach out to the Office of Ministry.

Administrative Coordinator, Susan Thomas, stomas@wocumc.org

Director, Office of Ministry, Rev. Donnetta Peaks, dpeaks@wocumc.org