

THE JOURNEY

A Summarized Guide to the Ministerial Candidacy Process In the North Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church

Congratulations on receiving a call to ministry! We are blessed to travel on this journey with you. You will begin your relationship with the Board of Ministry by attending a Candidacy Summit, which takes place every January and August. The following requirements must be fulfilled to attend the Summit:

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Consult with your pastor and write a statement of call. Read and discuss The Christian as Minister with your pastor. You can order this book at www.cokesbury.com.

1. You must have completed a minimum of one year as a member of UMC church (or another recognized United Methodist ministry setting, such as a campus ministry) immediately preceding candidacy, including a year of service in some form of leadership in that local church or ministry setting. A high school degree or equivalent is required at this point.
2. Request an interview with the Pastor/Staff Parish Relations Committee of your local church. Submit your written call statement and prepare to be interviewed in light of Wesley's historic questions, which can be found in the 2016 Book of Discipline, paragraph 310.1d, page 230.
3. Send a letter to your district superintendent, including a statement about your call, requesting that you would like to begin the candidacy process. Often, your DS will arrange to meet with you in person as well. You can find contact information for your district office through our conference website: www.ntcumc.org.
4. While at the District Office, request to be invited into UMCARES Plus (United Methodist Candidate and Record Entry System).
5. Submit the following items to your district office: a letter describing your call to ministry, a letter of recommendation from the SPRC, a letter requesting admission to the candidacy program and the assignment of a mentor (group or individual) and a check for \$75 made payable to the NTCUMC. The \$75 covers the cost of an extensive background check in the following areas: consumer credit, department of motor vehicles, sex offenders, and county and national crime. You will be notified if your revolving or credit card debt exceeds \$10,000 or student loans exceed \$30,000.
6. Contact the Board of Ministry Office to be trained on the UMCares Plus system, which is the way you'll complete the required STEPS in becoming a Certified Candidate. Contact Rev. Marsha Middleton (middleton@ntcumc.org) to get set up and trained.
7. Register for the Candidacy Summit. The registration form is in UMCares Plus. At the Candidacy Summit, you will continue the journey with a mentor group or an individual mentor.

The 2016 Book of Discipline is available on the NTC website. Click this link and choose Part 1: <http://www.northtex-asumc.org/Book-of-Discipline.html>. Section III. Candidacy for Licensed and Ordained Ministry (paragraph 310) begins on page 229. There is a search function on the toolbar.

Introductory Interview

If you have an individual mentor instead of participating in a mentor group, you must meet with DCOM for an introductory interview. You are eligible for this interview when you have completed the steps outlined above. Your mentor pastor should guide your exploration with candidacy resources such as *Answering the Call*, which is available electronically on the UMCares Plus (look at the left sidebar).

1. Prepare your call statement as found in Paragraph 310.1d., page 230. Put your name and the date of your interview at the top of each page. Be prepared to be interviewed in light of Wesley's historic questions, which can be found in the 2016 Book of Discipline, paragraph 310.1d.

Use a Microsoft Word format with 12-point font, double-spaced, with 1" margins.

You will receive a time for your interview after each STEP has been completed and the interviews are being scheduled.

2. The district office Administrative Assistant will run an extensive background and credit check which covers consumer credit, Department of Motor Vehicles, sex offenders, and county and national crime.

The NTC Board of Ordained Ministry has identified the following credit concerns requiring follow-up before you may apply for commissioning:

- revolving and/or credit card balance exceeding \$10,000
- educational installment balance exceeding \$30,000
- excessive late payments
- foreclosure proceedings
- judgments held in public records
- open liens
- bankruptcy

If such issues are identified, you will be expected to upload into UMCares Plus a written plan for reducing your debt or resolving the identified problem(s), updating that plan annually until the committee is satisfied.

3. Your mentor pastor is welcome to accompany you during your introductory or certification interview with the committee. However, she or he only may listen during the interview. Regardless of membership on the DCOM, he or she will wait with you outside the meeting room during the committee's discussion and vote.

Certification: A Significant Step in the Journey

Becoming a certified candidate for ordained ministry in the United Methodist Church is a significant milestone in our journey together. You must call the district registrar to ensure that you are on the agenda for this annual interview. The following requirements must be completed in order to qualify for a certification interview. All paperwork is submitted to UMCares Plus **at least 14 days prior to your interview**. Confidential information needs to be sent to your District Office.

1. You must receive approval from your mentor group leader or DCOM in order to undergo a psychological evaluation from The Center for Integrative Counseling and Psychology, 4525 Lemmon Avenue, #200, Dallas, Texas 75219-2100, (214-526-4525). The results of your evaluation must be included in your district file prior to your certification interview. Typically, your church pays 1/3 (but not always), the BOM pays 1/3, and you pay 1/3. The total cost is \$522.
2. In addition, you must have a completed criminal background and credit check as well as a transcript, which must be mailed to your District Office for your file.
3. A Candidate Disclosure form is in UMCares Plus. Complete the form and have it notarized, certifying that you have neither been accused in writing nor convicted of a felony, misdemeanor, or any incident of sexual misconduct or child abuse to the registrar. Send it to your District Office.
4. You must prepare written responses to ministry questions in the 2016 Discipline, Par. 310.2a, page 231, as well as the required statement of call (Par. 310.1d). You must also answer the following questions: (1) What is the meaning and significance of the Sacraments? And (2) What is your understanding of itinerant ministry? These are to be uploaded into UMCares Plus in the STEP called DCOM Certification Interview Requirements.
5. You must have the written approval of the Staff/Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) of your local church or equivalent and have the written approval of your charge conference (Par. 310.1e). These are to be uploaded into UMCares Plus in these STEPS.
6. If you are seeking to attend Licensing School, or otherwise serve as a Local Pastor, you must answer the following questions: (1) What is your understanding of baptism? Who can receive baptism, and who has the authority to perform a baptism? (2) What is your understanding of the sacrament of holy communion? Who can receive the sacrament, and who has the authority to preside over the sacrament? When and where is it appropriate for a Local Pastor to preside over this sacrament? (3) What do you see to be your usefulness as a licensed Local Pastor? In what areas would you like to serve as a Local Pastor? Upload the responses to these questions into UMCares Plus in the DCOM Certification Requirements STEP. Also, you must provide evidence of a high school diploma or equivalent.
7. Enter into UMCares Plus the dates of when you met with your mentor group or individual mentor. Upload a letter of recommendation from your mentor group leader(s) or individual mentor into the Mentoring STEP in Pathways.
8. Your responses should represent your best work. Your name and the date of your interview should be at the top of each page. You should include the original question as a heading before each written answer. ***Complete the proofreading Acknowledgment Form on UMCares Plus. Your answers should not be over eight pages in length. Also, it is your responsibility to invite your mentor (s) to the meeting. The mentor must prepare a one-page, written report on your candidacy process, which is to be uploaded into UMCares Plus 14 days prior to your interview.***
9. Approval for certification requires a three-fourths majority by the committee members present. Scholarship applications for Certified Candidates can be found on the North Texas Conference website (www.ntcumc.org) in the Center for Leadership Development under "Call to Ministry" (<http://www.ntcumcbom.org/board-of-ordained-ministry/ministerial-education-fund.html>).



Continuing Your Certification

As your journey toward possible local pastor or ordination continues, you are responsible for maintaining contact with your district office. If you change any of your contact information, you are responsible for providing those changes to the district and BOM office. You must also make sure that you contact your **Commissioning or Local Pastor Registrar** (depending on your track) for your annual continuation interview. The following items are required to be in your district file in order for you to qualify for a continuation interview:

1. A letter from your mentor pastor (verifying that you have had the required 4 quarterly meetings – In UMCares Plus)
2. An up-to-date copy of your transcript/course of study progress (in your DCOM File)
3. A copy of the minutes from the most current charge conference report from your home church
4. For Local Pastors: A letter from your supervising pastor or District Superintendent describing your progress (Pathways)
5. Written answers to the following questions: (In UMCares Plus)
 - What is your current involvement in the local church and ministries outside the local church?
 - Where are you in your educational program?
 - What changes have there been in your journey since we last met?
 - What growth areas are you discovering and addressing?
 - Where is God leading you?
 - Demonstrate how you are bearing fruit in your ministry.
 - How are you caring for yourself physically, emotionally, and spiritually?
 - What continuing education events have you attended during the year?
 - What questions, if any, do you have of the district Committee on Ministry?

*All of these items are to be submitted in Microsoft Word format with 12-point font in electronic format to the Commissioning Registrar or the Local Pastor Registrar via UMCares Plus or the District Office 14 days prior to your scheduled interview. ***If you are preparing for commissioning, please check with your District Office for any conference requirements that are not included in The Book of Discipline.*

The Recommendation Interview

The recommendation interview, which is required in order to appear before the Committee of Preparations & Qualifications, is the final step in your journey with the District Committee on Ministry. **The following requirements must be completed by August 1, or the previous business day, prior to your interview in order to qualify for your recommendation interview with DCOM. The written work must be typed, double spaced, and submitted in a Microsoft Word compatible format with 12-point font in UMCares Plus. The candidate's name must appear on each page and pages must be numbered.**

- A one-page statement of calling to ordained ministry, including plans for ministry within the United Methodist Church. (UMCares Plus)
- A recorded sermon and manuscript on a scripture of the candidate's choosing. (UMCares Plus)
- Written responses to the following questions. (Each response should be two pages or less.)

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

Describe the nature and ministry of the Church. What are its primary tasks today?

Explain the role and significance of the sacraments in the ministry to which you have been called.

What is the United Methodist understanding of the process of salvation?

- A letter of recommendation from the District Superintendent. (UMCares Plus)
- A letter of recommendation from the candidate's Mentor Pastor or Mentor Group Leader(s), including a statement of the exact dates when the candidate and mentor have met for the required quarterly meetings during the past year. (UMCares Plus)
- A letter of recommendation from someone in the candidate's current or most recent ministry setting. (UMCares Plus)
- An official transcript and current background/credit check (to be done through the **District Office**.) If any concerns are evident, the candidate will be contacted regarding the issues and encouraged to bring their plan for debt reduction to the meeting.

Appointments for interviews will be set when all paperwork has been received by the **Commissioning Registrar**. Please share your paperwork with your Mentor Pastor(s) for advice prior to submission of your final copy. Engage a proofreader. While sources must be cited appropriately, candidates are reminded that most of the content of their paperwork should be original. Please contact the **Commissioning Registrar** to be certain that everything has been received before the due date.

This is Your Journey!

Remember:

While we travel on this journey together, ultimately you are responsible for your journey. Please contact your district office with any contact information changes.

Also, make sure that you stay in contact with the correct Registrar regularly so that you are included on the appropriate meeting agenda at the right time.

DCOM Registrars: North Central District

Candidacy & Commissioning
Rev. Alice Coder
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