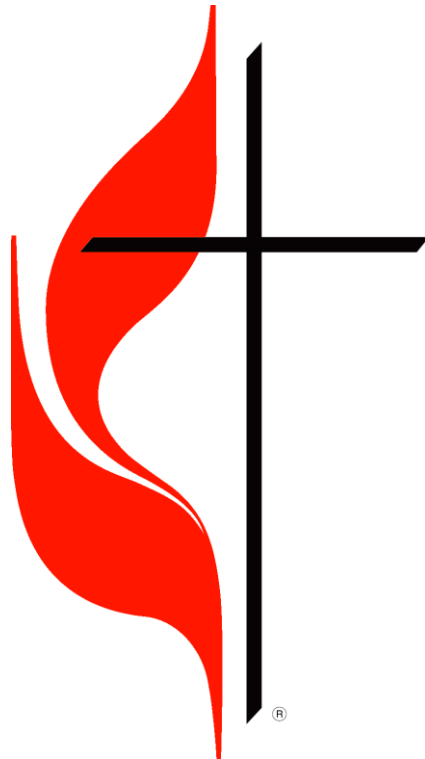


***District Committee
On Ordained Ministry
HANDBOOK***



***SUSQUEHANNA CONFERENCE
THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH***

2010-2012

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District Committee on Ordained Ministry Handbook
The District Committee on Ordained Ministry
Susquehanna Conference

Preface

The Mission Statement of the Board of Ordained Ministry of the Susquehanna Annual Conference: To partner with God in a life-giving process to discern, equip, nurture, and support those Christ followers whom the Holy Spirit is calling to joy-filled, passionate, transformational leadership in certified, licensed, and ordained ministry.

The DCOM is amendable to the annual conference through the Board of Ordained Ministry and serves to fulfill its mission in each district of the Annual Conference.

This handbook describes and is designed to assist the DCOM's of the Susquehanna Annual Conference in this mission. Our hope is to create consistent practices among all the DCOM's by specifying required actions while leaving space for the committees, prompted by necessity and guided by the Holy Spirit, to do all they can to discern and facilitate each candidate's calling to lay, licensed, or ordained ministry.

This handbook contains current policies and practices as stated at the time of publication. If any errors are found, corrections or additions needed, or alterations required, please communicate with the BOOM Candidacy Registrar.

August 2010

District Committee on Ordained Ministry Handbook
The District Committee on Ordained Ministry
Susquehanna Conference

ORGANIZATION

The ministry of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM) is defined in the *2008 Book of Discipline* ¶665

Guidelines from the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry for the work of the DCOM can be found in the [Board of Ordained Ministry Handbook, chapter 2](#)

Each DCOM is responsible for the following actions:

1. Meeting and encouraging candidates' progress as they enter and explore their calling as Inquiring, Exploring, and Declared Candidates.
2. Recommending candidates for **certification** for **licensed** or **ordained ministry** (criteria: Fitness for Ministry)
3. Recommending certified candidates for **Provisional Membership** prior to interviews with the Board of Ordained Ministry (criteria: Readiness for Ministry)
4. Recommendation for **licensing** for pastoral ministry (criteria: Fitness for Ministry)
5. Recommending Local Pastors for **Associate Membership** prior to interviews with the Board of Ordained Ministry (criteria: Effectiveness in Ministry)
6. Recommendation for **Readmission** to Conference Membership prior to interview with the Board of Ordained Ministry.
7. Aid and interpret the work of a congregation's **Pastor-Parish Relations Committee** as they approach the task of recommending candidates from their Charge.
8. Review and Certify those prepared to serve as **Certified Lay Ministers**

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 local pastor, encourage persons to enter the candidacy program, and maintain an accurate list of all candidates under its care.

Please note that all actions are *recommendations* to the Board of Ordained Ministry and shall be reported to the Board through the “**DCOM Action Report Form**” (see page 28) by the District Committee Registrar. **The Secretary will also send copies of minutes to the BOOM Registrars and Rev. David Norris.**

Candidacy Registrar
Rev. John Overman
joverman@comcast.net

Local Pastor Registrar
Rev. Joan Dodson
jdodson@susumc.org

Certified Lay Minister Registrar
TBA

Rev. David Norris
dnorris@susumc.org

OVERVIEW: RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DCOM

A. **Candidacy Certification:** *Fitness for Ministry*

- Spiritual fitness
- Psychological fitness
- Physical fitness
- Potential for effectiveness

Interviews are required at these points:

1. A “Getting-to-know you” interview, as well as annual “checking in” interviews will be conducted annually for each candidate as long as they are active in the Candidacy program.
2. *Certification Interview* following completion of all steps for certification
3. Annual renewal of certified candidacy

B. **Licensed Local Pastor:** *Annual License for Pastoral Ministry*

- Fitness issues (See Section A above)
- Readiness issues
 1. Recommendation for licensing and conference relationship (either part-time or full-time)
 2. Annual renewal of the license for pastoral ministry

C. **Associate Membership:** *Effectiveness in Ministry*

- Assess areas of developing competency
- Review academic background
- Consider current practice of ministry
- How has theological understanding evolved since licensing?

D. **Provisional Membership:** *Readiness for Ministry*

- Assess areas of developing competency
- Review academic background
- Consider field education experiences, internships, other practice of ministry experiences
- How has theological understanding evolved since certification?

E. **Certified Lay Minister**

- Preach, provide care and program development in the local church
- Works as part of a ministry team, supervised by an Elder.
- Bi-Annual recertification required.

DCOM LEADERSHIP JOB DESCRIPTIONS

District Superintendent

- Meets with new inquiring candidates to hear their sense of call and to aid their enrollment to the candidacy program via the GBHEM website.
- Provides a packet to the Inquiring Candidate which includes the Candidacy Checklist, Form 102 Personal Data Inventory, the Legal Clearances (Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance report, Criminal Record Check available from the Pennsylvania State Police, and EZ-Facts, for credit check) medical report form, Candidate's Disclosure Form and the instructions and authorization form for the expanded background check
- Assigns candidacy mentors and provides their contact information to the candidate
- Assists the DCOM chair in scheduling Candidates' interviews.
- Presides at Charge Conference where the vote is taken on candidates.
- Nominates District Committee on Ordained Ministry members and leaders.
- Obtains, from the former district, the files of candidates and local pastors moving to the district.
- Reviews the Clergy Report to Annual Conference to make sure all information is complete and accurate.

Chairperson

- Sets date and place for meetings.
- Schedules interviews with candidates.
- Sets the agenda and presides at the meetings.
- Makes sure that all DCOM leaders are following through on their responsibilities.
- Makes sure that the DCOM interviews candidates at the appropriate time with the appropriate documents in hand.
- Communicates the actions of the DCOM to the candidate.

Secretary

- Sends meeting notices, if not done by the chair.
- Records and sends minutes of the meetings to the DCOM members and to BOOM Registrars and David Norris.
- Keeps a file of all DCOM minutes.

Registrar

- Tracks all candidates.
- Maintains the official file for each candidate (kept in the district office). A “Candidacy File Checklist” or “Local Pastor’s File Checklist” shall be used to keep a record of documents in each candidate’s file. Record keeping procedures shall be governed by the “[guidelines for Keeping Ordained Clergy and Diaconal Ministry Personnel Records in the United Methodist Church](#)”, prepared by GCFA.
- Uses the Action Report Form (page 28) to record and report to the Board of Ordained Ministry all actions of the DCOM. Keeps a copy of this Action Report Form in the candidate’s file.

Board of Ordained Ministry Representative

- Exchanges questions and information between the District Committee and the Board of Ordained Ministry.
- Assists in training members of the District Committee.

DCOM INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Guidelines for preparing for an interview

- Allow adequate time before each interview to review the file, the written documents, the psychological assessment, and other documents. Discuss concerns and issues that need to be addressed in the interview.
- Decide on the most important questions and who will ask each question (do not have the chair or one person ask all the questions).
- Decide on the size of the interview group. (When necessary, the DCOM can subdivide for most interviews and then report back a recommendation to the total committee for the final decision.)
- Refer to the *DCOM Handbook* to make sure all items are in the file prior to the interview.
- Decide how long the interview will be.

Role of the Chair

- Make sure that prior to scheduling an interview, the necessary papers have been submitted and the psychological assessment is in the file.
- Welcome the candidate to the interview and introduce by name and church to the DCOM. State the purpose of the interview (Acquaintance, staying connected, Certification Interview, for recommendation for probationary or associate membership, etc.)
- Ask members of the DCOM to introduce themselves.
- Ask someone to begin with a prayer.
- State the time available for the interview and be the time-keeper.
- The chair may want to ask the first question. A possible first question might be: "Tell us about yourself, your sense of call, and where God is leading you."
- Be careful to involve the members of your committee in asking the questions. After the first question, the chair should focus on process and time-keeping rather than asking questions.
- Ask someone to close with prayer.

Things to remember

- For all interviews, a candidate's Pastor, staff and/or family members should excuse themselves from the room, interview, discussion, and voting.
- Decide how to begin the interview. Do not begin with the psychological assessment.
- The candidate does most of the talking.

- Remember that the mentor, if present, may not speak in the interview. Mentors are invited to be present at all interviews. Their role is *non-evaluative*. This should also be clear to the mentors when their written reports are prepared and submitted to the DCOM.
- Do not allow other committee members to answer questions or to engage in an argument or discussion with the candidate that distracts from the purpose of the meeting.
- This is not a therapy session.
- Recommendations should be determined by the whole committee after the interview, rather than individual committee members offering advice during the interview, and must be put in writing.
- Decide how the decision of the DCOM will be communicated: having the candidate wait in the hall vs. a phone call and/or letter following the DCOM meeting. Follow-up letters from the DCOM to candidates (after an interview/vote) will also be copied to the mentor.
- Evaluate the interview. What was effective in the interview? What would we do differently next time? Were any questions asked that were inappropriate?
- Remember the distinctions between candidates on the elder track and the deacon track. Ask appropriate questions.

Interview for: First-time and pre-certification candidates

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. Graduation from an accredited high school or certificate of equivalency
3. Review of *The Christian as Minister* and the *Ministry Inquiry Process* with a clergyperson, if needed
4. Letter from candidate with a call statement and request for admission to candidacy studies program
5. Form 102 in file (Personal Data Inventory)

Suggested Questions

- Tell us about your journey, your call to ministry.
- Tell us about your leadership experiences in the church.
- What are your plans for the future, ...personally, ...for the church?
- Share aspects of your devotional life. How are you growing spiritually?
- Tell us about your personal strengths...your areas of growth.
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- What 2-3 characters in the Bible emulate your own spiritual life/journey?
- Talk about your family.
- Talk about positive and negative relationships in your life.
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically? Mentally? Emotionally?
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- Tell us about your seminary classes (for seminary students).

Action Required

The DCOM does not vote on candidates prior to certification. The Secretary does record the meeting in the minutes and the Registrar sends an action report to the BOOM Candidacy Registrar.

Interview for: Candidacy Certification for Ordained or Licensed Ministry

Requirements prior to interview

1. Form 102 in file (Personal Data Inventory)
2. All required criminal and background checks, with documentation in file.
3. Form 103 Medical Report completed (both sides) in file
4. Form 114, Candidate's Disclosure Form
5. Form 104 in file, indicating recommendation by the candidate's home church charge conference (or equivalent body) as specified by the district committee on ordained ministry, receiving a 2/3 vote.
6. Written report from the mentor indicating completion of the candidacy studies
7. Written response to statements in ¶311.3
8. Psychological Assessment report completed.

Documents to be copied and distributed to committee members

#1 from above: Form 102 (Personal Data Inventory)

#6 from above: Mentor Report

#7 from above: Written response to statements in ¶311.3 (these could be emailed to the committee beforehand)

Suggested Questions

- Tell us about your journey, your call to ministry.
- Share several highlights of your ministry this year.
- Tell us about your leadership experiences as a student.
- What were some of your frustrations in ministry this year?
- What are your plans for the future, ...personally, ...for the church?
- Share about your devotional life. How are you growing spiritually?
- Tell us about your personal strengths...your areas of growth.
- What are you doing to avoid burnout?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- Questions about theology and sacraments prior to certification.
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- What 2-3 characters in the Bible emulate your own spiritual life/journey?
- What did you learn about yourself in the psychological assessment process?
- Talk about your family.
- Talk about positive and negative relationships in your life.
- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically? Mentally? Emotionally?
- Share a conflict situation in which you have been involved and how you dealt with it.
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- Tell us about your seminary classes (for students).

Action Required

Individual written ballot, three-fourths majority required to certify. Criteria:

- Spiritual fitness
- Physical fitness
- Psychological fitness
- Potential for effectiveness

The DCOM Registrar sends an action report to the BOOM Candidacy Registrar.

Interview for: Licensing for Pastoral Ministry (Local Pastor)

Requirements prior to interview

1. In order to attend Licensing School, one must be a certified candidate. (see requirements for Candidacy Certification)
2. DCOM should be familiar with the purpose and nature of licensed ministry

FYI:

- There is no age determination to begin Course of Study.
- At this time, Licensing School costs \$750.
- Those attending Course of Study will be reimbursed \$125 for each course that has been passed with a C or above, *after* their grades have been received. The DCOM should encourage congregations to fund these amounts through the continuing education budget.

Suggested Questions

- Tell us about your journey, your call to ministry.
- Share several highlights of your ministry this year.
- Tell us about your leadership experiences as a student.
- What were some of your frustrations in ministry this year?
- What are your plans for the future, ...personally, ...for the church?
- Share about your devotional life. How are you growing spiritually?
- Tell us about your personal strengths...your areas of growth.
- What are you doing to avoid burnout?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- Questions about theology and sacraments prior to certification.
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- What 2-3 characters in the Bible emulate your own spiritual life/journey?
- Talk about your family.
- Talk about positive and negative relationships in your life.
- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically? Mentally? Emotionally?
- Share a conflict situation in which you have been involved and how you dealt with it.
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- Tell us about your seminary classes (for students).

Action Required

Majority vote with recommendation required to specify full time or part time local pastor. Once approved, the candidate will have to register for and complete Licensing School. The DCOM Registrar sends an action report to the BOOM Local Pastor Registrar.

Criteria:

- Spiritual fitness
- Psychological fitness
- Physical fitness
- Readiness for ministry
- Potential for effectiveness

Interview for: Renewal of Certified Candidacy (annually)

Requirements prior to interview

Note: The district committee must let the candidate know what is required. The candidate has the responsibility for requesting these reports be sent to the district committee.

1. Annual recommendation of the candidate's home church charge conference in file
2. A written report from the candidate's mentor in file
3. An official transcript from the school, college, or seminary
4. A written report from the candidate on service and leadership in the church with reference to ¶311.2a (i.e. growth in these areas since certification)

Documents to be copied and distributed to committee members

#2 from above, Mentor Report

#4 from above, written report from candidate (should be emailed to the DCOM prior to the interview)

For those seeking Provisional Membership:

Address the following question in preparation for fulfilling the requirement of ¶324.2 (service requirement): "How are you using your gifts for ministry and leadership outside of the local church?"

See **Appendix A**: Starting July 1, 2010, candidates in all districts must complete this requirement as delineated in this document. (Those who were certified candidates before July 1, 2010 may meet the requirements as already determined by their DCOM)

Suggested Questions

- Tell us about your journey, your call to ministry.
- Share several highlights of your ministry this year.
- Tell us about your leadership experiences as a student.
- What were some of your frustrations in ministry this year?
- What are your plans for the future, ...personally, ...for the church?
- Share about your devotional life. How are you growing spiritually?
- Tell us about your personal strengths...your areas of growth.
- What are you doing to avoid burnout?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- Questions about theology and sacraments prior to certification.
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- What 2-3 characters in the Bible emulate your own spiritual life/journey?
- What did you learn about yourself in the psychological assessment process?
- Talk about your family.
- Talk about positive and negative relationships in your life.
- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically? Mentally? Emotionally?
- Share a conflict situation in which you have been involved and how you dealt with it.
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- Tell us about your seminary classes (for students).

Action Required

Individual written ballot, three-fourths majority required to renew.

The DCOM Registrar sends an action report to the BOOM Candidacy Registrar.

Interview for: Local Pastor Continuance (annually)

Requirements prior to interview

Note: The district committee must let the local pastor know what is required. The local pastor has the responsibility for requesting these reports be sent to the district committee.

1. Transcripts from undergraduate school, Course of Study, or Seminary
2. Written Mentor Report

FYI: Continuance as a Local Pastor is described in the *Book of Discipline* ¶319

1. Those attending Course of Study will be reimbursed \$125 for each course that has been passed with a C or above, *after* their grades have been received.
2. A person having completed Licensing School but not appointed may take up to 4 courses at Course of Study. That person will not receive any Conference financial aid or reimbursement for these courses
3. Those who have completed the Course of Study no longer require a Mentor.

As the local pastor progresses through Course of Study (or seminary) these are the kinds of issues that should be explored in order to assess progress:

Year 1 - Leadership

- Which local church committees are required by the *Book of Discipline* and what is the function of each? How is your church structured for mission and ministry?
- How are you using the distinctive Wesleyan emphases and characteristics of The United Methodist Church to lead your church in making disciples of Jesus Christ?
- Describe leadership qualities which you demonstrate in your ministry and the strengths and weaknesses of those qualities?

Year 2 - Theology

- How do you apply United Methodist theology in your teaching?
- Describe ways your congregation lives out the theology of grace.
- In what ways has your theology of grace shaped your understanding of the Sacraments?

Year 3 - Practice of Ministry

- How has your preaching improved since you were licensed?
- In what ways have your spiritual disciplines affected your practice of leadership in ministry?
- Describe ways you lead your congregation in offering pastoral care?
- Bring a recent worship bulletin and be prepared to talk about your order of worship.
- Describe ways that, in partnership with laity, you make disciples of Jesus Christ, and train and empower these disciples to produce tangible fruits of love of God and love of neighbor.

Year 4 and beyond

- In years 4 and 5, talk with the local pastor about how they apply their education to their ministry setting.
- For those who have completed COS or M.Div., track continuing education requirements and review progress.

Other Suggested Questions

- Focus on the candidate's areas of strength and areas for growth rather than spending a lot of time on what is going on or not going on in their church. Be careful to not spend the time evaluating the church/charge but keep the focus on the local pastor and his/her role.
- What/where are your support systems?

- Did you establish any goals or objectives for personal or professional growth last year (in consultation with your mentor)? What were they? What did you do toward accomplishing these goals and how well did it work?
- What were your points of growth over the past year?
- How do you equip laity in your church? Share some specific examples.
- What are your plans for the future? Continuing education plans? Plans for ordination?
- What was your Course of Study focus last year? Did you find it helpful/useful? What changes or improvements to your practice of ministry can you identify as a result of the Course of Study?
- In what ways have you grown the most in the past year, both personally and as a pastor? What do you feel were the causes of this growth?
- 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? How do you feel you have grown as a result of it?
- Talk about your pastoral appointment? Has it been what you expected when you felt called to become a local pastor? In what ways have you been surprised? In what ways have you been affirmed that you are properly responding to God's call in your life.
- What is the single most important thing you need at this point in time to become a better pastor?
- What was the greatest joy you experienced in the past year? Why do you feel this was so?
- How do you integrate your personal and professional responsibilities? Do you experience tensions between family and church expectations of you?

Action Required

Majority vote of the committee.

Send a letter stating the result of the vote to the Local Pastor each year.

The DCOM Registrar sends an action report to the BOOM Local Pastor Registrar, specifying full time or part time service, as determined by the DS or Cabinet..

Guidelines for Accepting as Certified Candidate From Another Annual Conference

¶312.3, *The Book of Discipline* states that “a person who is a certified candidate or who is in the candidacy process may have her or his status or studies accepted by another district committee in the same or another annual conference.”

1. If a candidate from another Annual Conference requests a transfer, notify your District Superintendent and the BOOM Registrar of the request.
2. The candidate’s file must include all of the following items, which are required by the Susquehanna Conference for certification as a candidate:
 - ✓ personal data inventory (GBHEM form 102)
 - ✓ All required background checks
 - ✓ medical report (GBHEM form 103)
 - ✓ Candidate’s disclosure form (GBHEM form 114)
 - ✓ record of the Charge Conference approval
 - ✓ the psychological assessment
 - ✓ the written response to ministry questions in ¶311.3
 - ✓ mentor report
 - ✓ verification of certification as a candidate
 - ✓ annual renewal of candidacy, if applicable.

For a **licensed local pastor**, all preceding items plus

- ✓ documentation of licensing (copy of the license)
 - ✓ annual renewal of the license for pastoral ministry
 - ✓ transcripts (seminary or Course of Study) if applicable
 - ✓ transcripts of undergraduate education if applicable
 - ✓ recommendation from the current district superintendent.
3. The District Committee on Ordained Ministry reviews the candidate’s file.
 4. An interview is required prior to acceptance of the candidate.
 5. If the candidate is certified and is requesting local pastor status, the District Committee makes a recommendation regarding licensing by the Susquehanna Conference. Licensing is dependent upon the person receiving an appointment in the Susquehanna Conference.

Action Required

Any action taken is reported to the BOOM Candidacy Registrar for approval by the Board.

Interview for: Certified Lay Minister

Description: ¶271

In order to enhance the quality of ministry to small membership churches, expand team ministry in churches, and in deference to an expression of gifts and evidence of God's grace associated with the lay ministry of early Methodism, the certified lay minister shall preach the Word, provide a care ministry to the congregation, assist in program leadership, and be a witness in the community for the growth, missional and connectional thrust of The UMC as part of a ministry team with the supervision and support of a clergy person.

1) Entrance Requirements – All persons serving a local church beyond pulpit supply who are not in the process of being licensed or ordained must be enrolled in this program. Persons who are already serving as “congregational leaders” will be given one year to complete the entrance requirements for this program or will not be permitted to serve beyond pulpit supply. This will be monitored by the Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (BOOM).

- a) Recommendation of pastor
- b) Approval of the Charge Conference
- c) Status of certified lay speaker or equivalent training
- d) Recommendation of District Superintendent
- e) Complete state police and child abuse and other required clearance checks
- f) Complete psychological assessment
- g) Complete Boundaries and Safe Sanctuary training
- h) Complete an orientation to the Certified Lay Minister program (by BOOM).
Topics for orientation: roles in ministry, role of self-care, role of leadership, mutual team ministry (covenant and expectations)
- i) Two references
- j) Approval of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry

Upon completion of the entrance requirements, a person may serve a church or charge as a candidate for certified lay ministry. A Certified Lay Minister is assigned, not appointed, and thus has no legal standing to perform weddings and has NO sacramental privileges.

2) Program requirements will be monitored by the District Committee on Ordained Ministry (DCOM) and an assigned Supervising Elder.

- a.) Complete courses in the following areas as approved by the DCOM (the courses may be through Leadership University, Lay Seminary, a Seminary approved by the University Senate, or other source approved by the DCOM)
 - i. Preaching and Exegesis;
 - ii. Christian Education
 - iii. Care of the Congregation
 - iv. United Methodist Polity
 - v. Conflict Resolution & Congregational Dynamics
 - vi. Leading and Planning Worship
- b) Two courses must be completed each year until the above requirements are fulfilled. Failure to complete the educational requirement in any given year will result in the participant being dropped from the program.
- c) Develop a covenant for mutual team ministry with a supervising Elder and the

members of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee (PPRC) and participate in the ministry covenant developed.

d) Apply in writing to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.

Upon completion of the program requirements, recommendation of the local church being served and the Supervising Elder, and approval of the DCOM, the candidate may become a Certified Lay Minister.

3) Continuing Requirements (Monitored by the DCOM and the supervising elder.)

a) Complete at least one additional course each year through one of the following sources: Leadership University, Lay Seminary, Advanced Lay Speakers Course or others as approved by your DCOM with these possible topics:

- i. UM History
- ii. Faith Sharing
- iii. UM Theology
- iv. Ministry with Children
- v. Sacraments
- vi. Advanced Preaching
- vii. Youth Ministry
- viii. Courses in Bible; etc.

b) If not assigned, apply for recertification in writing biannually to the District Committee on Ministry (DCOM) upon

- Ministry Review by the Church Council or Charge Conference from the congregation of which he/she is a member
- Satisfactory completion of an approved Continuing Education event
- Recommendation of the District Superintendent.

c) If under assignment, biannual interview with and approval from the District Committee on Ministry (DCOM) after

- Ministry Review by the Church Council or Charge Conference of the church/charge being served
- Satisfactory completion of an approved Continuing Education event
- Recommendation of the District Superintendent.

d) Attend and participate in Annual Conference as an “at large” lay member if possible.

Failure to complete the continuing requirements will result in the Certified Lay Minister being dropped from the program. BOOM will maintain lists of candidates for Certified Lay Ministry, Certified Lay Ministers and Certified Lay Ministers not serving a church. DCOM will file biannual action reports with the CLM Registrar regarding all CLM’s and CLM candidates.

Suggested Interview Questions

- Tell us about your journey of faith.
- Tell us about your leadership experiences in the local church.
- Tell us how your service in your local church has demonstrated your appreciation of the history, polity, doctrine, worship and liturgy of The United Methodist Church. (This is a required question from the *Book of Discipline*.)

- Share about your devotional life. How are you growing spiritually?
- Tell us about your personal strengths...your areas of growth.
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- What 2-3 characters in the Bible emulate your own spiritual life/journey?
- Talk about your family.
- Talk about positive and negative relationships in your life.
- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically? Mentally? Emotionally?
- Share a conflict situation in which you have been involved and how you dealt with it.
- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.

Action Required

Majority vote of the DCOM.

The DCOM Registrar sends an action report to the BOOM CLM Registrar

Interview for: **Recertification of Certified Lay Minister (biannually)**

Once certified, CLM's must meet the following "Continuing Requirements" as monitored by the DCOM and the supervising elder.

a) Complete at least one additional course each year through one of the following sources: Leadership University, Lay Seminary, Advanced Lay Speakers Course or others as approved by your DCOM with these possible topics:

- i. UM History
- ii. Faith Sharing
- iii. UM Theology
- iv. Ministry with Children
- v. Sacraments
- vi. Advanced Preaching
- vii. Youth Ministry
- viii. Courses in Bible; etc.

b) *If not assigned*, apply for recertification in writing biannually to the District Committee on Ministry (DCOM) upon

- Ministry Review by the Church Council or Charge Conference from the congregation of which he/she is a member
- Satisfactory completion of an approved Continuing Education event
- Recommendation of the District Superintendent.

c) *If under assignment*, biannual interview with and approval from the District Committee on Ministry (DCOM) after

- Ministry Review by the Church Council or Charge Conference of the church/charge being served
- Satisfactory completion of an approved Continuing Education event
- Recommendation of the District Superintendent.

d) Attend and participate in Annual Conference as an "at large" lay member if possible

Suggested Questions

- Share several highlights of your ministry this year.
- Tell us about your leadership experiences.
- What were some of your frustrations in ministry this year?
- What are your plans for the future, ...personally, ...for the church?
- Share about your devotional life. How are you growing spiritually?
- Tell us about your personal strengths...your areas of growth.
- What are you doing to avoid burnout?
- What are your goals for the year ahead?
- What have you read that has been helpful in your spiritual life?
- Talk about your family.
- Talk about positive and negative relationships in your life.
- What are the most stressful aspects of ministry for you?
- What do you do to take care of yourself physically? Mentally? Emotionally?
- Share a conflict situation in which you have been involved and how you dealt with it.

- Share a leadership experience you have had this year.
- Are you considering licensed or ordained ministry? If not, why not?

Action Required

Majority vote of the DCOM.

The DCOM Registrar sends an action report to the BOOM CLM Registrar

Interview for: Recommendation for Associate Membership

Requirements prior to interview

1. Must have completed the five year Course of Study, up to half of which may be taken by correspondence or online/distance learning courses The requirement for History, Doctrine, and Polity must be completed by the appropriate class in Course of Study.
2. Serve at least 2 years full time following completion of Course of Study. Those years are not to be part-time years rolled into a 2 year equivalent.
3. Reached the age of 40.
4. Completed a minimum of 60 semester hours toward a Bachelor of Arts or an equivalent degree in a college or university listed by the University Senate.
5. Declared their willingness to accept continuing full-time appointment.
6. For associate membership, the Board is looking for **effectiveness in ministry**. Effectiveness will be evaluated in four areas: Theology, Worship & Communication, Call & Life Issues, and a VIM Experience.

Suggested Questions

- All of us are called by God. Share about your specific call to associate membership.
- Why are you seeking associate membership?
- Questions that would integrate their theology with their practice of ministry.
- Questions that make the connection between their Course of Study (or seminary) education and their practice of ministry.
- Has your theology changed since you have been in the Course of Study? How?
- Where/what are your support systems?
- What did you learn about yourself and about ministry through the candidacy, course of study, and pastoral experiences?

Action Required

Majority vote

Criteria:

- Academic background
- Consider current practice of ministry
- Review how theological understanding has evolved since licensing
- Effectiveness, evaluated in four areas: Theology, Worship & Communication, Call & Life Issues, and a VIM Experience.

The DCOM Registrar sends an action report to the BOOM Candidacy Registrar and the Local Pastor Registrar.

Interview for: Recommendation for Provisional Membership (aka “Commissioning”)

Requirements prior to interview

1. Annual renewal of certified candidacy or license for pastoral ministry
2. Certified candidate or licensed local pastor for at least one year
3. Has fulfilled the service requirement of ¶324.2 to the satisfaction of the DCOM by answering the question: “How have you used your gifts for ministry and leadership outside of the local church?”
4. Met the educational requirements of the *Book of Discipline* (¶324) and the Susquehanna Conference Board of Ordained Ministry (see page 24)
5. Local Pastors may fulfill the requirements as delineated under ¶324.6 and as they have met the educational requirements of the Susquehanna Conference Board of Ordained Ministry
6. If this is also the interview for candidacy renewal or local pastor continuance, see the requirements on those pages.

Suggested Questions

- All of us are called by God. Share about your specific call to ordained ministry?
- Questions that would integrate their theology with their practice of ministry.
- At this point, the Board is looking for **readiness for ministry**. Readiness will be evaluated in four areas: Theology, Worship & Communication, Call & Life Issues, Leadership & Conflict Resolution.
- Questions that make the connection between their seminary education and their practice of ministry.
- How has your theology changed since you have been in seminary?
- Where/what are your support systems?
- What did you learn about yourself and about ministry over the past few years?

Action Required

Written ballot with three-fourths majority vote

Criteria:

- Academic background
- Consider field education experiences, internships, other practice of ministry experiences
- Review how theological understanding has evolved since certification.
- Review carefully educational requirements. *Raise any questions with the BOOM Deacons or Elders Registrar*
- Readiness will be evaluated in four areas: Theology, Worship & Communication, Call & Life Issues, Leadership & Conflict Resolution.

The DCOM Registrar sends an action report to the BOOM Candidacy Registrar AND to the BOOM Elders OR Deacons Registrar. In all cases, specify that the service requirement (BOD ¶324.2, cf. Appendix A of this handbook) has been met.

Board of Ordained Ministry
Susquehanna Conference, The United Methodist Church

EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP

The *Discipline* lists specific course requirements that must be included in graduate theological education prior to provisional membership in the United Methodist Church (see ¶315.4c). Candidates for deacon or elder shall have completed the basic graduate theological studies (BGTS) in the areas of Old Testament, New Testament, theology, church history, mission, worship/liturgy, evangelism, and United Methodist doctrine, polity, and history. These courses may be included within or in addition to a seminary degree.

Note that the Susquehanna Conference requires completion of all educational requirements prior to commissioning and provisional membership.

For candidates on the **elder** track, the following *additional* courses are required:

1. 2 Courses in Preaching
2. 2 Courses in Worship Preparation/Leadership
3. 1 Course beyond survey/introduction courses in Old Testament
4. 1 Course beyond survey/introduction courses in New Testament
5. 1 Course in Theory and Practical Teaching
6. 1 Course in Introductory Pastoral Counseling

Note: only 1/3 of credits toward masters degrees leading to ordination may be earned as distance education courses. Hybrid courses (those that comprise both online and campus instruction) are counted as distance education and are included in the 1/3 allowance. In addition, institutions are required to identify distance education courses on students' transcripts.

Although each seminary has the responsibility to designate which basic course meets the core requirements and advise students of these courses, the conference Board of Ordained Ministry will have the final authority to approve academic studies. Questions should be directed to the BOOM Elders Registrar.

A candidate for **deacon** shall have completed studies of a theological master's degree from a University Senate-approved school, *or* received a master's degree in the area of ministry in which the candidate will serve, and completed one-half of the BGTS.

Board of Ordained Ministry
Susquehanna Conference, The United Methodist Church

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT

The Psychological assessment provides the DCOM with indicators of probable psychological fitness and psychological readiness for ministry.

At the candidacy level, the purpose of the psychological assessment is to determine gross psychopathology as well as issues for further growth and development, particularly in the areas of emotional intelligence and leadership style.

How a Candidate is Assessed

1. When a candidate is ready for testing, they communicate with their District Superintendent, who will submit the name to the testing agency. The candidate then calls the testing agency for an appointment. (They will have 30 days in which to schedule their appointment.)
2. The candidate reviews the results with the psychologist. They may request a copy from the testing agency.
3. The report is sent to the BOOM Candidacy Registrar and is considered property of the Annual Conference. A copy is made and sent to the District Office. ***This information is confidential and may only be used for the work of the DCOM and MAY NOT BE COPIED under any circumstances.***
4. Candidates may access the DCOM copy of the report, but it must remain in the district office.
5. The report is kept in the candidate's file at the district office until the candidate is moved on through commissioning, is discontinued, or withdraws. At such a time, the DCOM copy is returned to the BOOM Candidacy Registrar immediately.

NOTE: The Psychological Testing process can take up to four (4) months from start to finish. Candidates should plan accordingly.

APPENDIX A

**SERVICE REQUIREMENT
FOR
PROVISIONAL MEMBERSHIP AND COMMISSIONING**

“Each candidate shall have demonstrated his or her gifts for ministries of service and leadership to the satisfaction of the district committee on ordained ministry as a condition for provisional membership.” (*Book of Discipline, 2008 - ¶324.2*)

The following requirements shall fulfill the condition of the above paragraph:

1. The service shall be a minimum of one hundred (100) hours and may be completed in one or more settings.
2. The “practice of servant leadership” provision is central to our understanding of this requirement. The service requirement is to be fulfilled in a setting that is community based rather than in a local church setting. *–Please note: All service requests and approvals will be handled on an individual basis.*
3. If possible, the setting should reflect a different life setting than that which is familiar to the candidate. (It must be considered, however, that candidates will not have equal access to service settings depending on geographical location, other employment, location of college or seminary, family priorities, etc.)
4. While this requirement would most likely be done on a volunteer basis, a paid position could meet the requirements.
5. The service requirement must be done after the candidate begins the candidacy process and prior to commissioning. Work done previously cannot be counted toward this requirement.
6. A unit of CPE could meet one half (1/2) of the service requirement.
7. Candidates must submit a written proposal outlining their plan for service to the District office for approval by the DCOM *prior to* the beginning of service.
8. The service setting should be monitored by the candidacy mentor and an on-site supervisor. A written report of service shall be given by the on-site supervisor, to be presented to the District Committee, for each service setting.
9. Candidates shall submit a brief statement of learning to the DCOM.
10. Service requirements completed and approved in another district will be recognized by other DCOMs. If partial requirements have been met, the candidate will meet with the current DCOM to develop a satisfactory plan for completion.

APPENDIX A

Service Requirement
for
Provisional Membership and Commissioning

Standard Approval

The one hundred (100) hour service requirement for persons in candidacy for ministry *must receive prior approval* from the District Committee on Ministry. Please complete this form and submit it to the District Office.

Name _____

Date _____

Service Setting

Describe the setting:

Area of community served

Supervisor

What needs of the community will be served

Number of hours anticipated

Proposed Starting Date _____ Anticipated Completion Date _____

**APPENDIX B: Susquehanna Conference District Committee on Ordained Ministry
Action Report to the BOOM Registrar**

District _____ Date _____

Candidate's Name _____

Candidate's Address _____

The district Committee on Ordained Ministry took the following action(s) regarding the person listed above [check the appropriate action(s)]:

- _____ Granted admission to the candidacy studies program according to ¶311.1b
- _____ Granted certified candidacy status according to ¶665.6 (3/4 majority vote)
- _____ Accepted from another conference/district as a certified candidate (¶312.3)
- _____ Recommended continuation as a certified candidate (¶312)
- _____ Discontinued as a certified candidate (¶313)
- _____ Recommended for licensing for pastoral ministry, to attend Licensing School, and upon completion, and when and if appointed to a local parish, award of the license as a local pastor – specify status below (¶316)
- _____ Recommended for continued eligibility for appointment as a local pastor (¶319)
- _____ Recommended discontinuance as a local pastor (¶320.1)
- _____ Recommended for provisional membership toward deacon's orders (¶324.10)
- _____ Recommended for provisional membership toward elder's orders (¶324.10)
- _____ Recommended for associate membership (¶322.1)
- _____ Introductory interview for reinstatement/readmission ___ Recommended ___ Denied
- _____ Recommended for reinstatement/readmission to conference relationship
 - _____ Reinstatement as a certified candidate (¶313.2)
 - _____ Reinstatement as a licensed local pastor (¶320.4)
 - _____ Readmission to provisional membership (¶364)
 - _____ Readmission after honorable or administrative location (¶365.4)
 - _____ Readmission after exit of ministerial office (¶366)

Persons who are awarded the license as a local pastor, or who are continued in that status must be classified as one of the following (please check appropriate designation):

- _____ Full-time local pastor (¶318.1)
- _____ Part-time local pastor (¶318.2)
- _____ Student local pastor (¶318.3)

Signature of dCOM chair or registrar

**APPENDIX C: Susquehanna Conference District Committee on Ordained Ministry
Action Report to the BOOM Certified Lay Minister Registrar**

Certified Lay Ministers and Certified Lay Minister Candidates

District: _____ Date: _____

CLM Candidate's Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

Supervising Elder: _____

Please indicate the completion of the following entrance requirements:

	Approval of the Charge Conference	Date:
	Recommendation of pastor	
	Status of certified lay speaker	
	Recommendation of District Superintendent	
	State police and child abuse and other required clearance checks completed	
	Psychological assessment completed	
	Boundaries and Safe Sanctuary training completed	
	Complete an orientation to the Certified Lay Minister program (by BOOM) Topics for orientation: roles in ministry, role of self-care, role of leadership, mutual team ministry (covenant and expectations)	
	Two references	
	Apply in writing to District Committee on Ordained Ministry	
	Approval of the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.	Date:

List approved courses completed (minimum of 2 per year):

Date all required courses are completed:

___ Approved for continuation as a CLM candidate Date:

___ Approved for Certified Lay Minister Date:

___ Biannual approval for continuation as CLM Date:

Place of Assignment _____ Date:

Signature DCOM Chair: _____

CANDIDACY MENTOR REPORT

Name of Candidate: _____

Mentor: _____

Date: _____

Number of times met with candidate: _____

What are this person's gifts and graces for ministry?

How has this person responded to information about the calling and the work of ministry?

What is this person's end intention in the candidacy process?

How does this person use feedback from others?

CANDIDACY MENTOR REPORT (Continued)

What family, local church, work and other influences are important for this person in relation to licensed or ordained ministry?

What issues do the candidate and the DCOM need to explore together?

Other comments

Signed: _____
(Mentor)

I have read the report of my mentor and authorize its release to the District Committee on Ordained Ministry.

Signed: _____
(Candidate, having read the above)

